The Historical Residential Development of Grinnell, Poweshiek County, Iowa, 1855-1958

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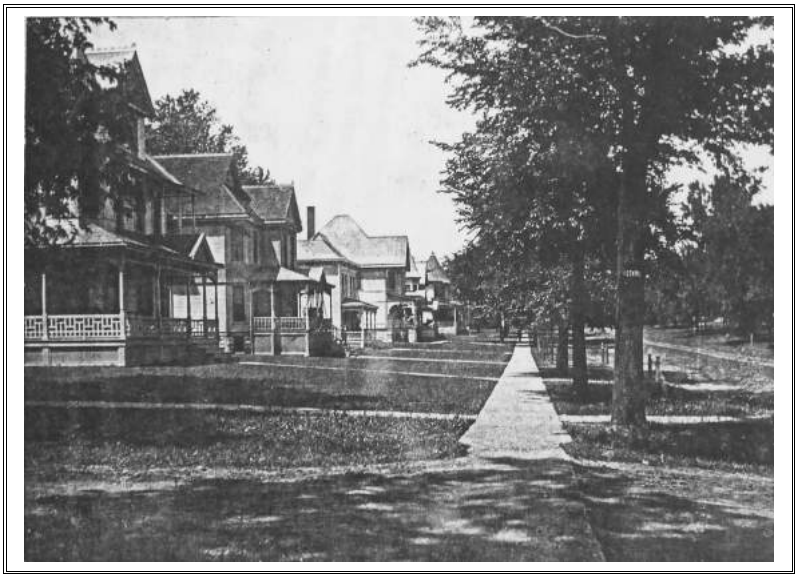

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The Historical Residential Development of Grinnell, Poweshiek County, Iowa, 1855-1958:

Cover Photographs:

Upper photo, Main Street viewed north from Sixth Avenue, lower photo, Broad Street, 1300s-1400s, viewed north from Eighth Avenue, both images c.1906, both images provided courtesy of the Grinnell Historical Museum.

Credits:

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The Historical Residential Development of Grinnell, Poweshiek County, Iowa, 1855-1958:

Introduction:

This document was prepared in conjunction with the preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the North Grinnell Historic District. The original scope of work envisioned an intensive survey of that proposed district along with the development of a multiple property documentation form that would have summarized the community history and made National Register eligibility recommendations for residential properties throughout the community. The project was amended to actually nominate the district and this historical context document provides the historical background for the district and proposes a total of four historic districts, three residential and one college campus districts, that would supplement the National Register listed commercial district.

Overview:

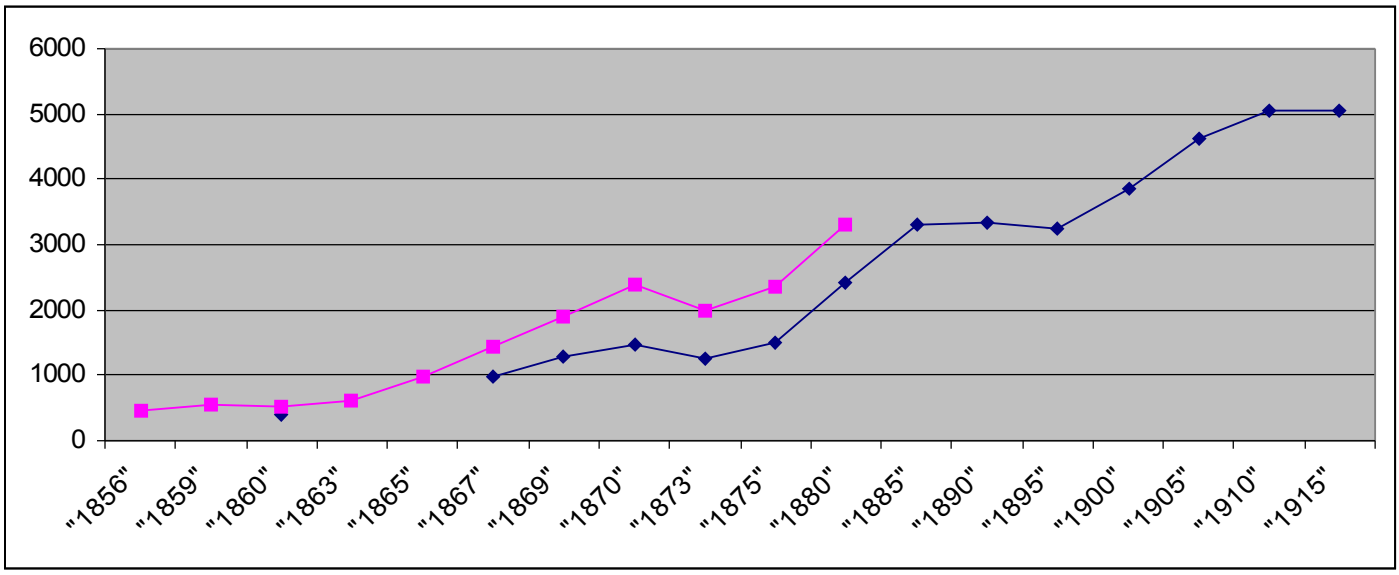

Chart 1: Grinnell's population growth, 1860-1915
(Grinnell Township represents the higher line, 1856-1880)

The trendline in Figure 1 identifies two excellerated periods of town population growth, these being 1875-85 and 1895-1910. There was also some growth following the arrival of the railroad in 1863. Grinnell served as the western railhead until 1867 when the linework continued west. Two periods of population stagnation and loss were experienced between 1870 and 1875, and between 1885 and 1895. Overall the chart appears to indicate that the downtown fire had a more direct impact on population than did the 1882 cyclone. Heightened periods of new house construction would be expected during the two growth periods.

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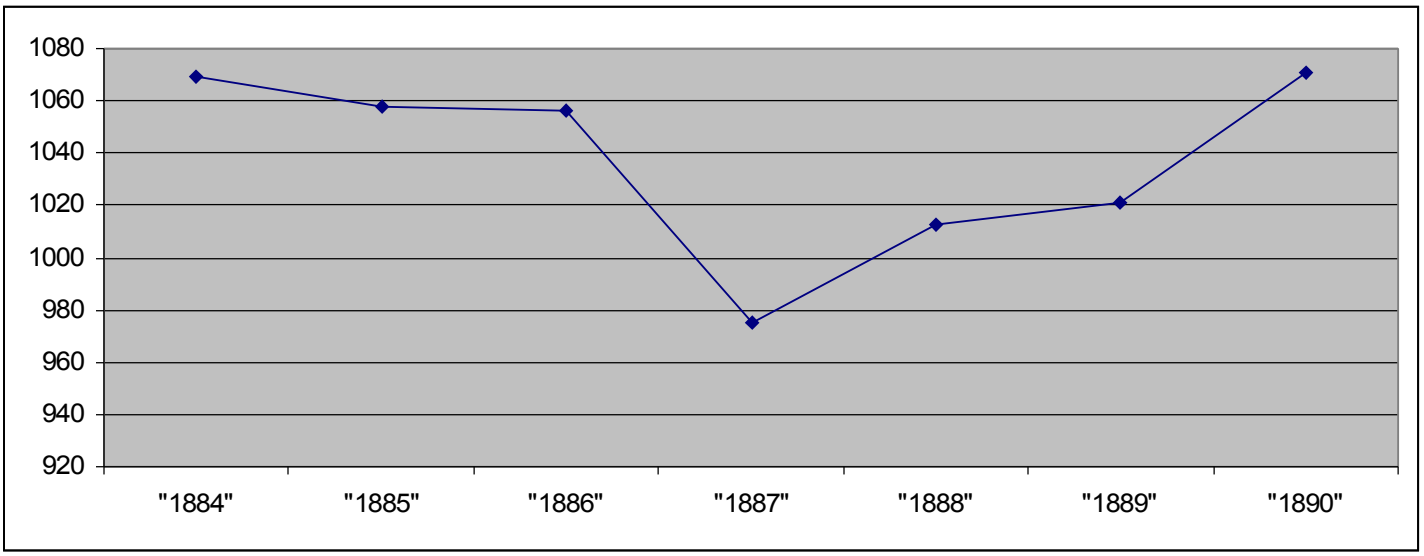

Chart II: Grinnell school-age population, 1884-1890
(*Herald*, July 18, 1890)

Each fall the school system completed a very rigorous census of children aged five to 21 years as a part of their planning process. Chart II augments the census data with annual and more accurate figures. Clearly the total population was stable to declining over this five-year period, with out-migration taking a record toll between 1886 and 1887. The slight increase in 1889 reflected the imported families of construction workers who were rebuilding the burned-out downtown. The basic point is that this better data documents a lack of population increase between 1885 and 1890 (*Herald*, July 18, September 16, 1890).

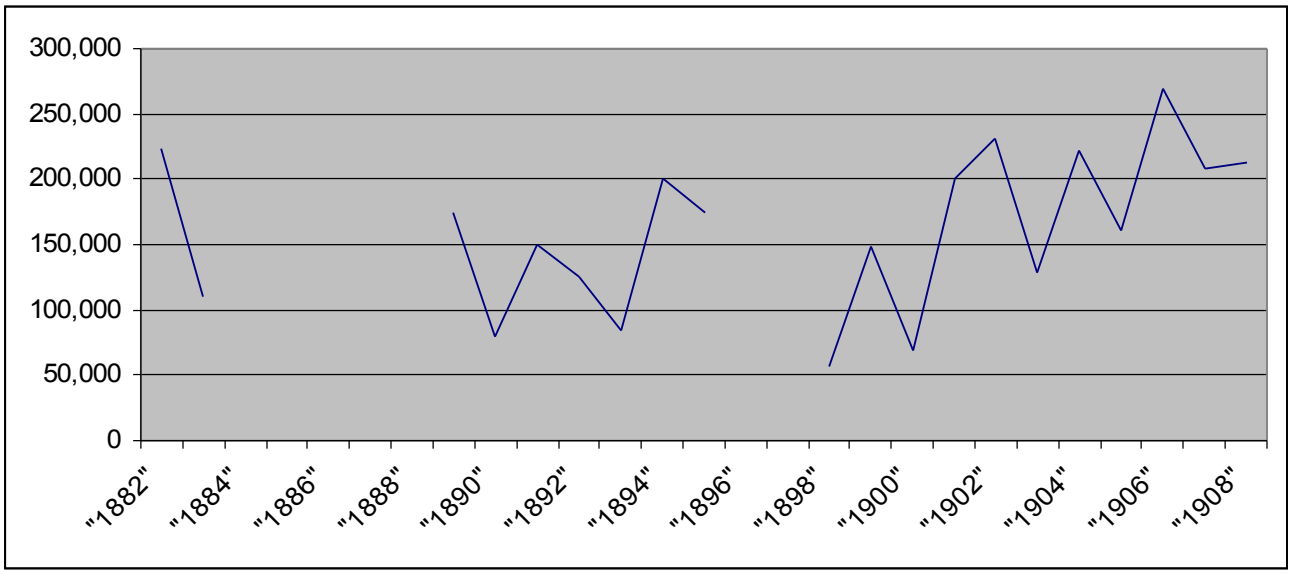

Figure 2: Total annual improvements in Grinnell, 1882-1908

Grinnell's History and Development:

Grinnell's original plat was a simple rectangle that consisted of five rows of six blocks each. Block 13 was reserved as a public park. Broad Street, the widest town street was the principal street. Street names were practical, being simply numbered avenues on east/west running streets. The plat pre-dated the actual railroad location so tracks would

later simply cut across the cityscape as was necessary. There was no provision for college grounds as well. The earliest houses clustered in the northwest quadrant of the new city.

Figure 3 depicts the original plat while Figure 4 shows the impact of the railroad right-of-ways on the town layout. Professor John Kleinschmidt developed the latter figure to illustrate the pattern of Grinnell's expansion. Grinnell was a village from 1854 until 1865, at which point it became a town and had an elected mayor. It became a city of the second class in 1882, the same year that it was almost knocked off the face of the earth by a cyclone. South Grinnell was platted and annexed in 1856, while the West Grinnell Addition followed a year later. Such overly ambitious enlargements were typical of the heady times and it is doubtful that either addition gained many if any residences before the national economy crashed in 1857. There wasn't another Grinnell plat for a dozen years. The North Grinnell plat coincided with the westward resumption of railroad construction following the Civil War. Grinnell was fortunate to have served as the western Rock Island Railroad terminus, the forwarding and commissioning point for all points westward, for the years 1863-1867. The East Grinnell Addition followed in 1870, in response to the arrival of the town's second railroad, the Iowa Central Railroad.

Figure 4 also locates the several successive annexations that took place between 1875 and 1877. The former (see below) municipal expansions were to shut down peripheral saloon operations. The latter , accomplished in April 1877, was in response to petitions from those who predominantly lived south of the town. The North Grinnell plat included land for Iowa College. Figure 4 locates two substantial additions, Hobart's to the northeast and Hamlin's, west of North Grinnell. The two additions totalled 60 acres and roughly equalled the area within the North Grinnell plat.

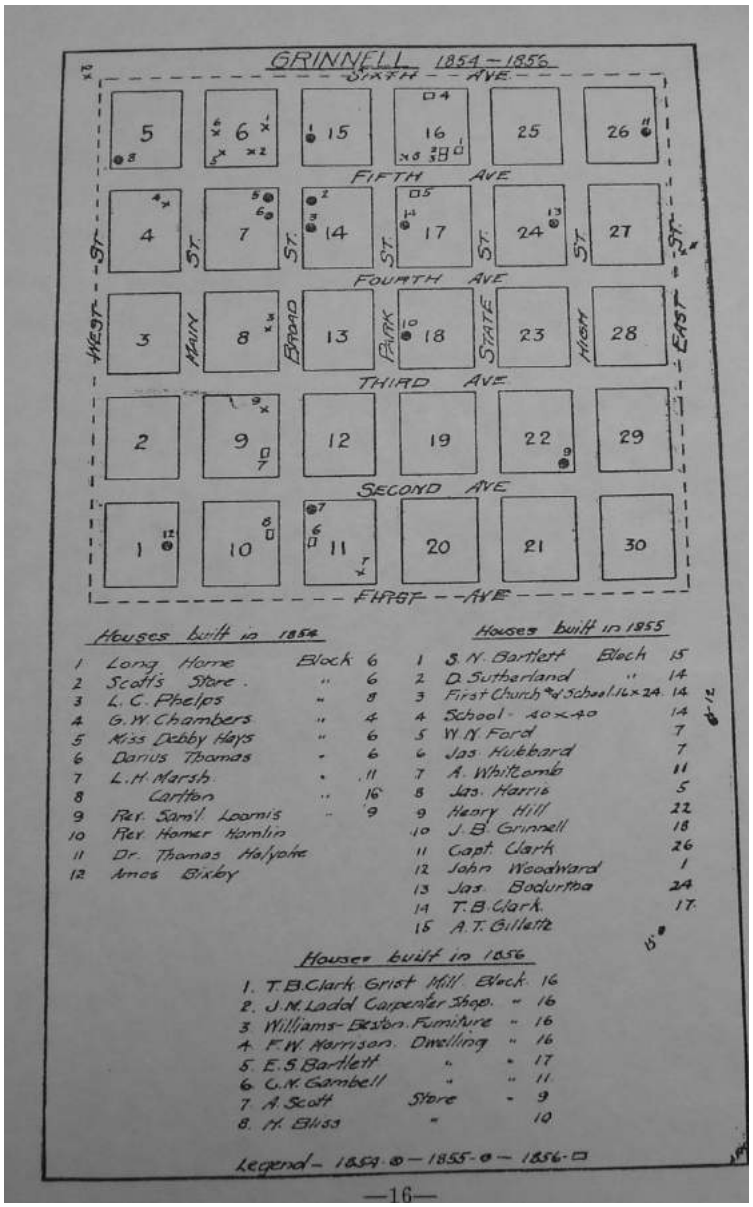
GRINNELL 1854–1856
SIXTH AVE.
FIFTH AVE.
FOURTH AVE.
THIRD AVE.
SECOND AVE.
FIRST AVE.
WEST ST.
EAST ST.
MAIN ST.
BROAD ST.
PARK ST.
STATE ST.
HIGH ST.
5 6 15 16 25 26
4 7 14 17 24 27
3 8 13 18 23 28
2 9 12 19 22 29
1 10 11 20 21 30
Houses built in 1854
1 Long Horne Block 6
2 Scott's Store " 6
3 L. C. Phelps " 8
4 G. W. Chambers " 4
5 Miss Debby Hays " 6
6 Darius Thomas " 6
7 L. H. Marsh " 11
8 Carlton " 16
9 Rev. Sam'l Loomis " 9
10 Rev. Homer Hamlin
11 Dr. Thomas Holyoke
12 Amos Bixby
Houses built in 1855
1 S. N. Bartlett Block 15
2 D. Sutherland " 14
3 First Church & School 16x24 14
4 School - 40x40 14
5 W. N. Ford 7
6 Jas. Hubbard 7
7 A. Whitcomb 11
8 Jas. Harris 5
9 Henry Hill 22
10 J. B. Grinnell 18
11 Capt. Clark 26
12 John Woodward 1
13 Jas. Bodurtha 24
14 T. B. Clark 17
15 A. T. Gillett
Houses built in 1856
1. T. B. Clark Grist Mill Block 16
2. J. M. Ladd Carpenter Shop. " 16
3. Williams-Beston Furniture " 16
4. F. W. Harrison Dwelling " 16
5. E. S. Bartlett " " 17
6. C. N. Gambell " " 11
7. A. Scott Store " 9
8. M. Bliss " 10
Legend – 1854 ⊙ – 1855 ○ – 1856 □
—16—

Figure 3: The original Grinnell town plat and the earliest residences, 1854-56
(John Kleinschmidt Papers, Grinnell College, Box 7, Folder 11)

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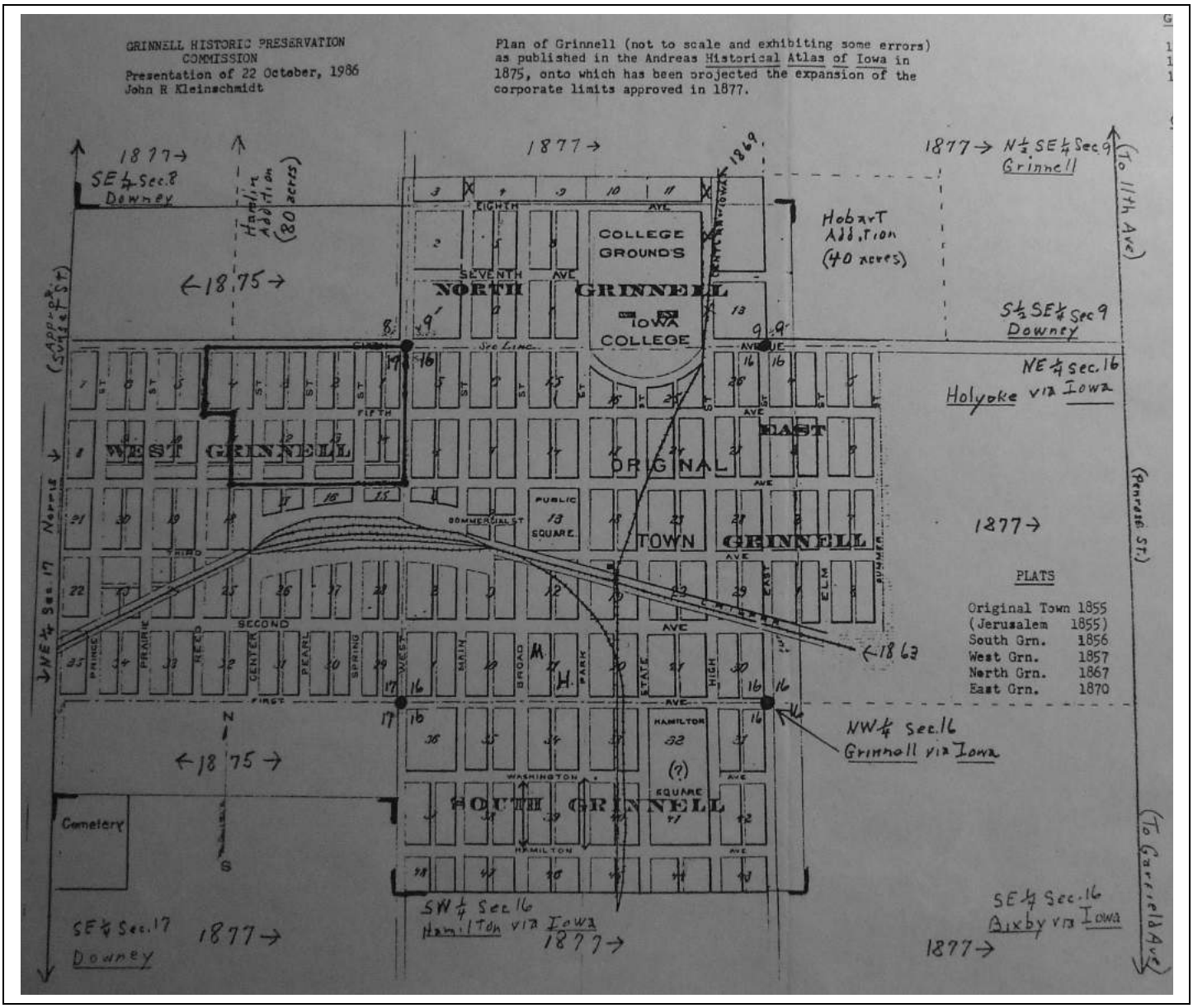

Figure 4: Grinnell's growth, 1855-1877
(John Klineschmidt Papers, Grinnell College Special Collections, Box 7, Folder 13)

The Temperance Movement and the Great Saloons Shut-Down:

Grinnell allowed no saloons or alcohol within its corporate limits. In line with state and national trends, Grinnell's citizenry formed a Temperance Society on December 12, 1874 and it wasn't long before a saloon cropped up in apparent response. Albert J. Preston mis-judged the northern boundary of the city in January 1876 and built a simple little hostlery on the nroth side of 8th Street, just east of West Street, in early May. Preston enjoyed a fair trade for just three days before he was premptorily closed down. Undaunted, Preston moved out of town to the west, to the northwest corner of West and 8th and repeated his salooning effort. The city annexed what was Hamlin's Addition to shut down the new stand. Preston's second saloon was open half a year but the proprietor was the clear loser, being convicted on a dozen charges and fines that totaled $1,205. So the temperance problem directly aided and abetted the northward expansion of the city. The city fathers acted so quickly to annex the new acreage that a replatting was later required (Morley, History of 1302 Main Street, pp. 1-3; *Herald* August 31, 1906).

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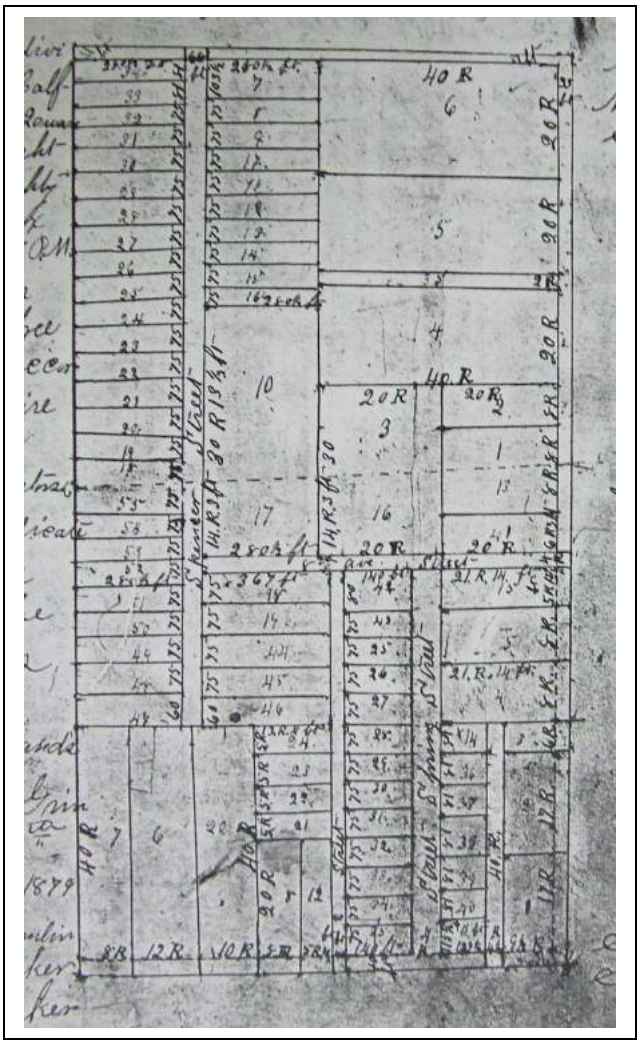

Figure 5: Hamlin's Addition, annexed in 1875, was platted April 23, 1879 (Morley)

Grinnell organized as a city of the second class in 1878, at which time there were four churches, those of the Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian and the Universalists (1878 City Directory).

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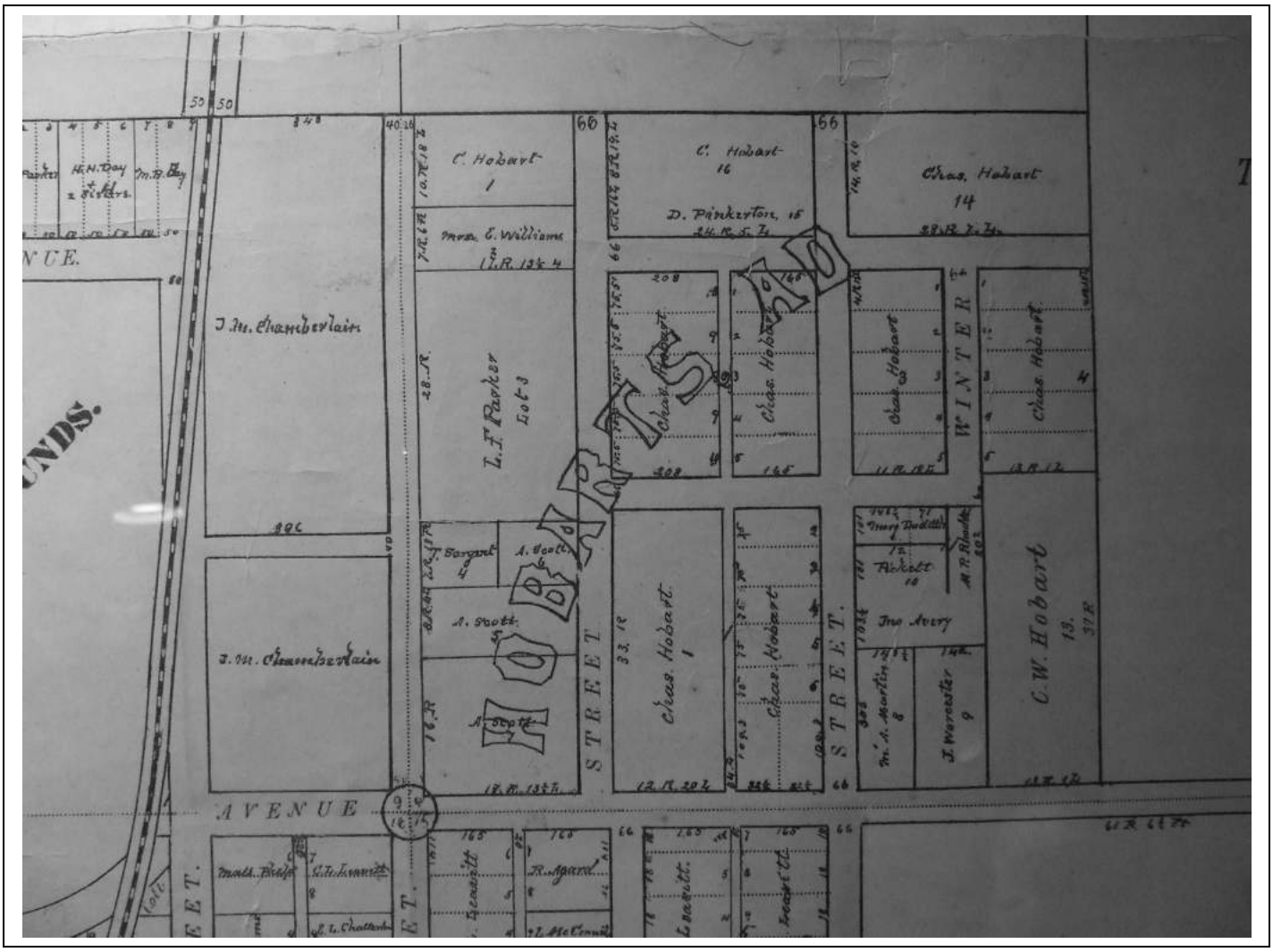

Figure 6: Northeast Grinnell, 1879 Grinnell Plat Map

Hobart's Addition, platted between 1870 and 1897, remained virtually undeveloped as of 1879. The land east of the college remains unplatted and undeveloped, a clear sign that the college culture had not expanded in that direction. The north/south streets terminate just above where East 8th Street was later to be extended (1895), but the only and main east/west road was 6th Avenue.

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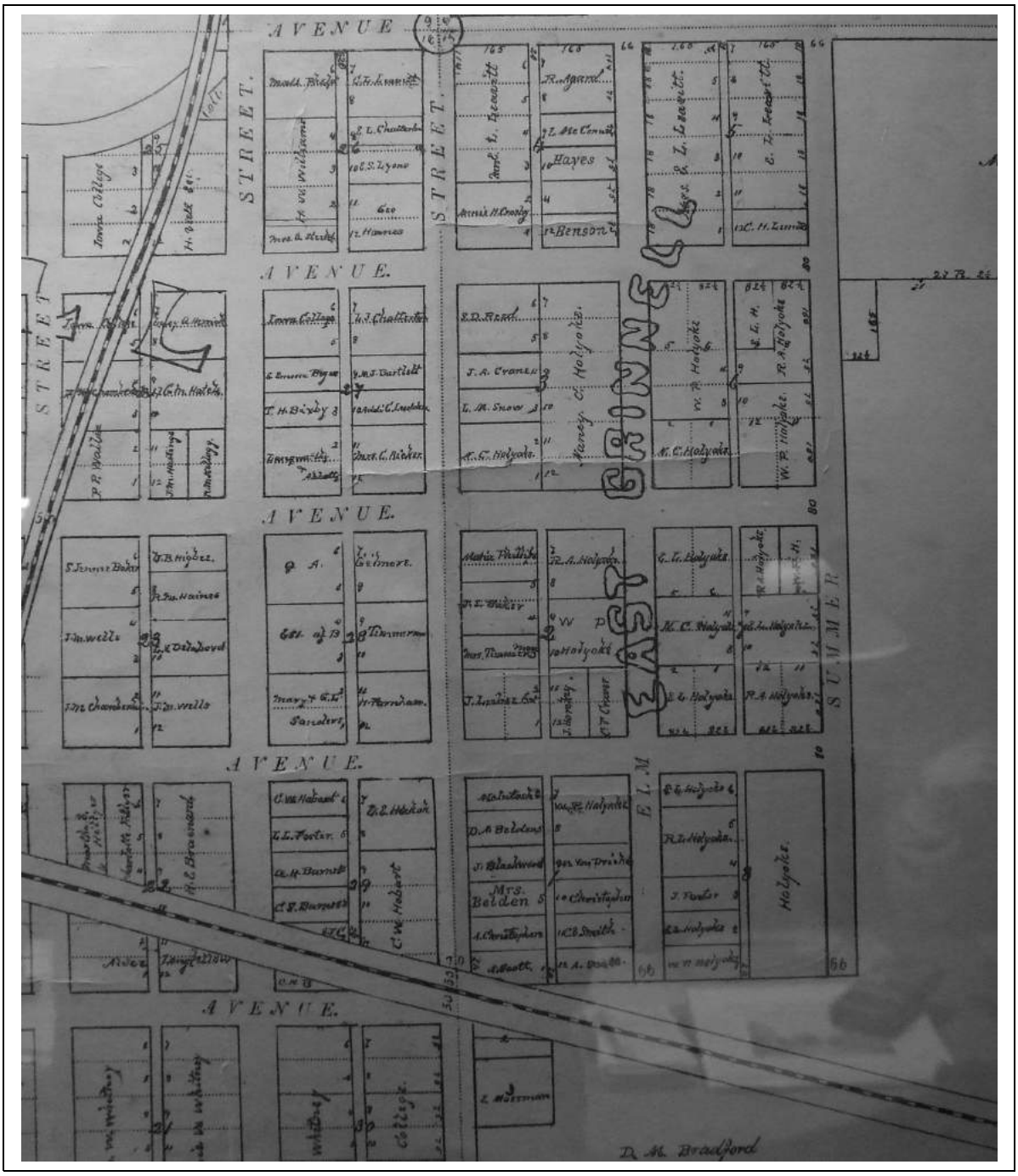

Figure 7: East Grinnell, 1879 Grinnell Plat Map

East Grinnell was substantially built up by 1879, just nine years after its platting. The north/south-running streets, east to west are Summer, Elm, High, State and Park. Summer runs along the eastern city boundary line. East 2nd runs along the base of this map, north of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. The only east/west through street is 6th, to the north. Note the larger lots, an indication that any existing houses were associated with large parcels. This portion of the city was fairly thoroughly platted as of this time.

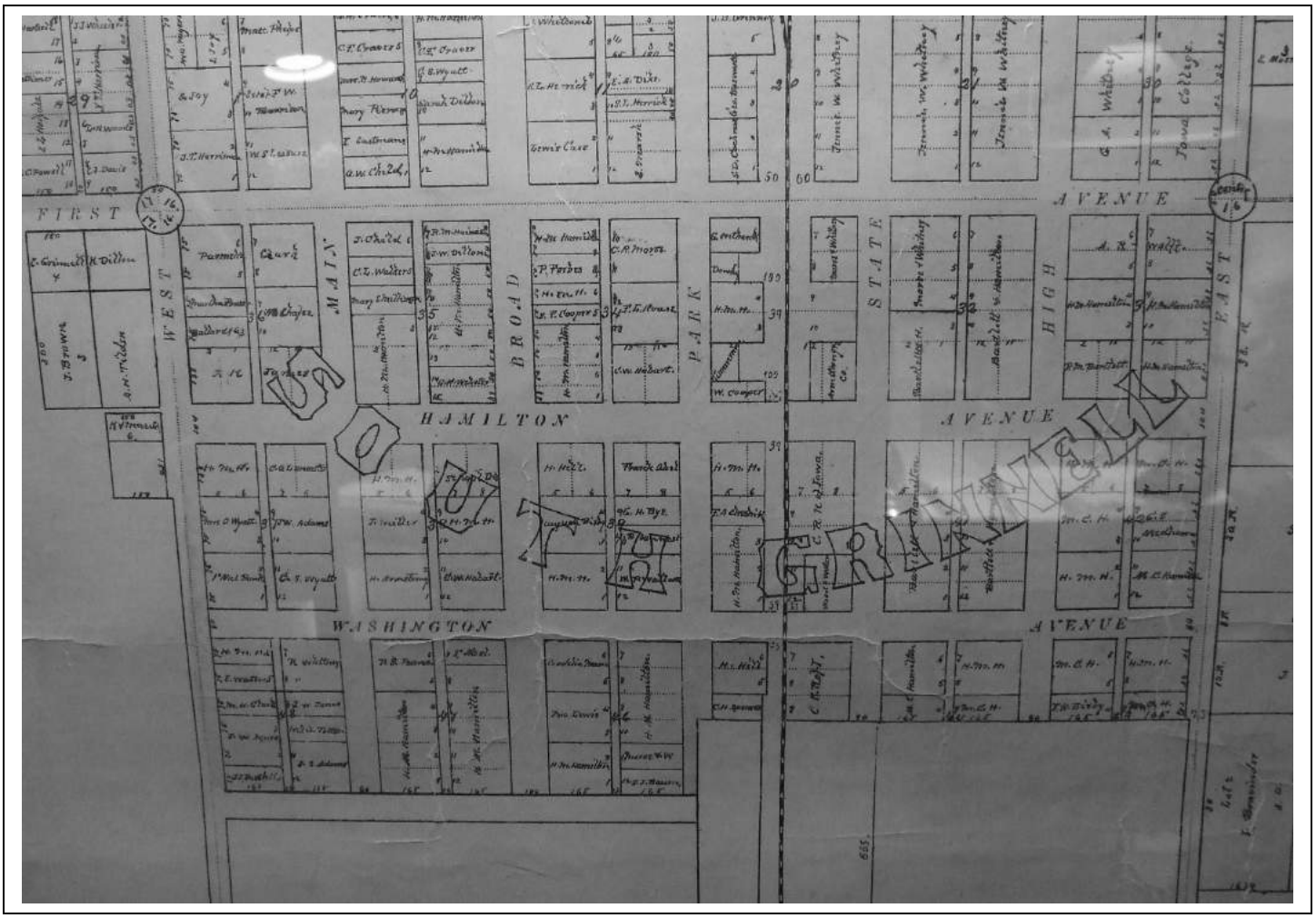

Figure 8: South Grinnell, 1879 Grinnell Plat Map

South Grinnell was largely sold off in lot parcels and was heavily built up by 1879. Note that Hamilton and Washington avenues ran east/west to the south of the ascending series of numbered avenues. The Central Railroad runs north/south across the center of the map segment. This part of the city was fairly well platted and developed as of 1879.

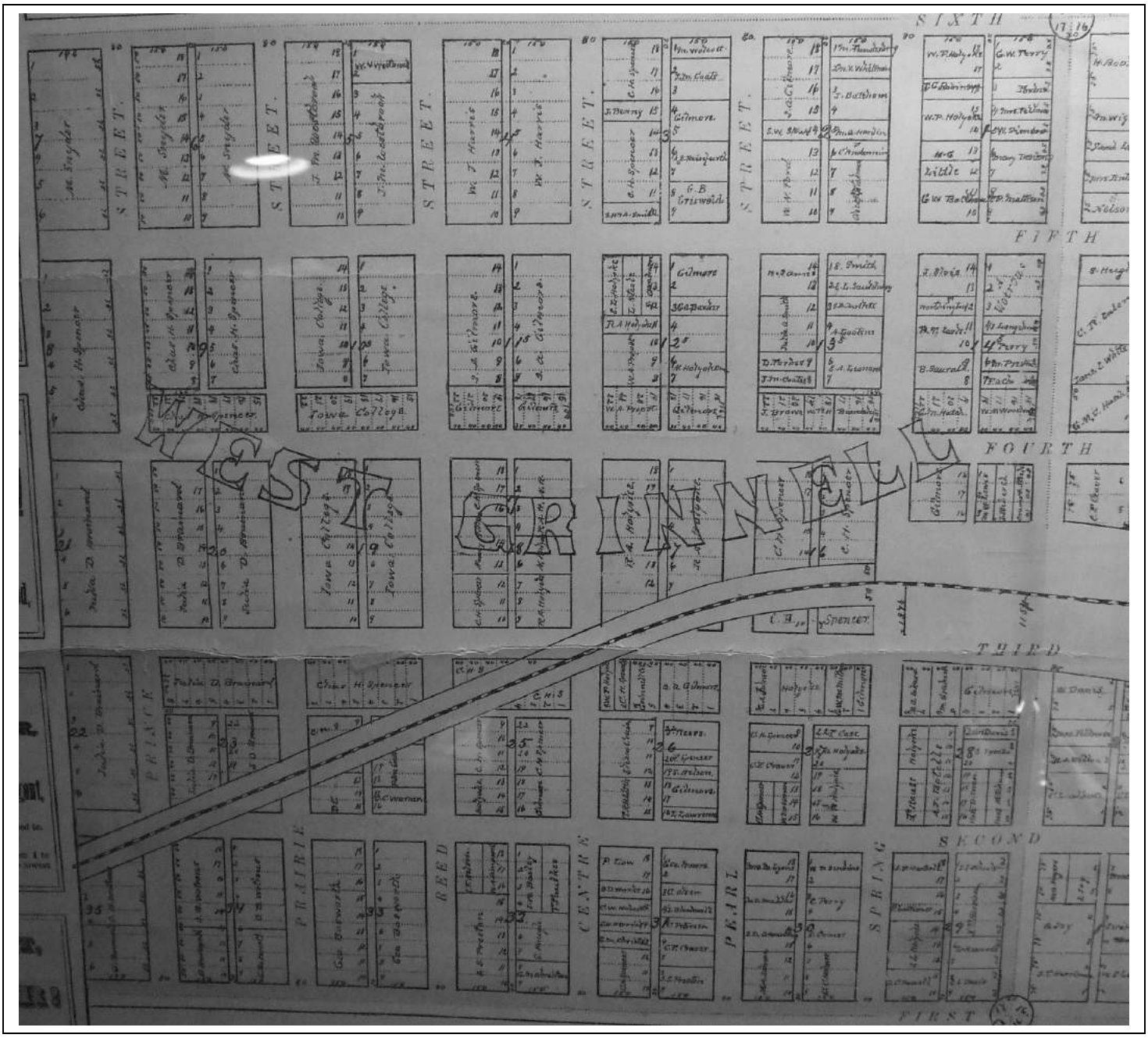

Figure 9: West Grinnell, 1879 Grinnell Plat Map

This part of Grinnell, commonly referenced as the southwest part, was fully platted and not fully developed as of 1879. West of Center Street most of the platted land remained in large parcel holdings, a clear indication that this section of town was largely not yet built up. The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad angles across this map segment and the west part of the downtown is located in the area east of center. Note the north-facing lots along the south side of 3rd Avenue and the north side of 4th Avenue. Alleys run to the south of these lot sets.

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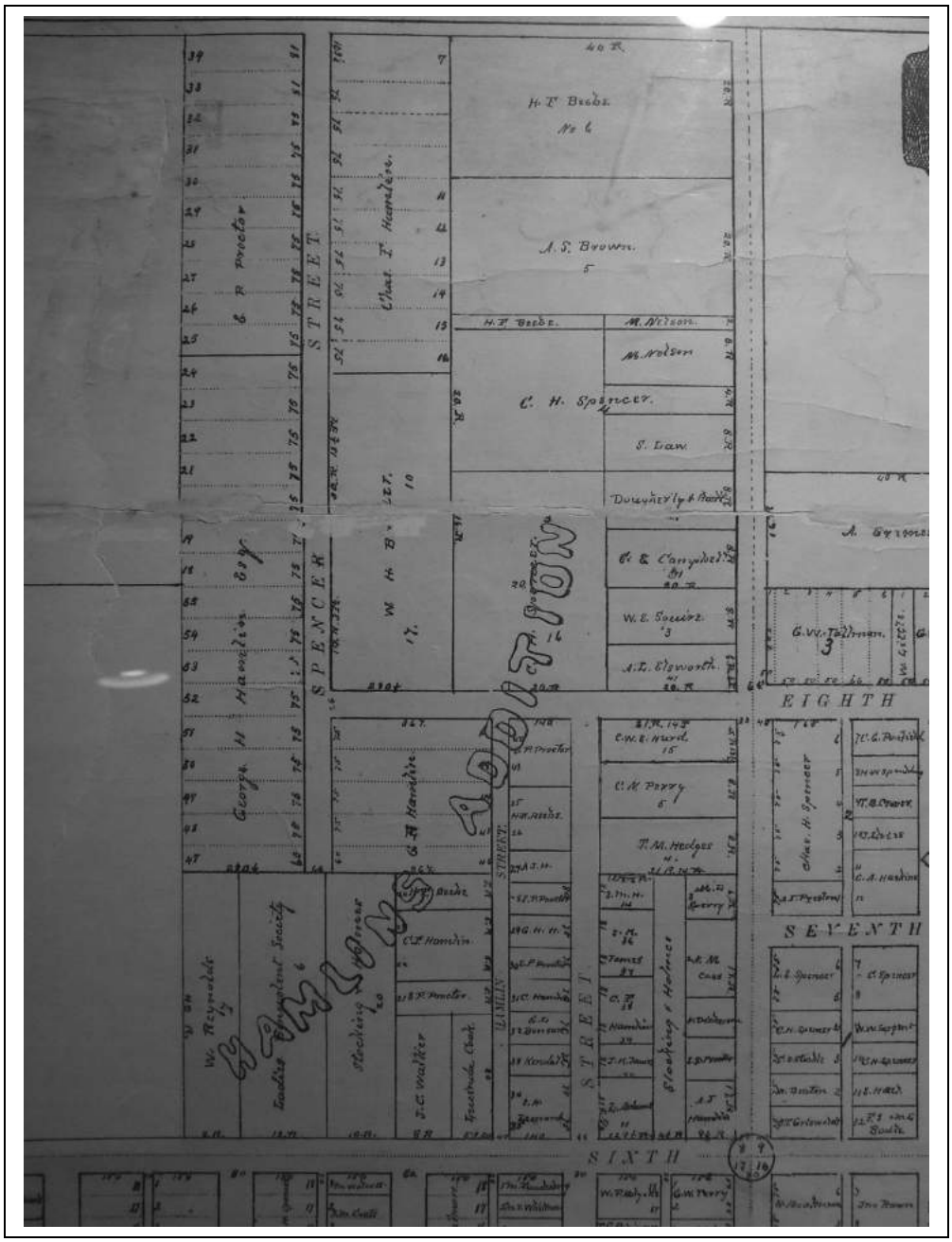

Figure 10: Northwest Grinnell, Hamilton's Addition, 1879 Grinnell Plat Map

Hamlin's Addition, platted between 1870 and 1897, remained virtually undeveloped as of 1879, save for its eastern edge that fronted onto West Street. This was the only part of the city that saw fit to arrange itself by its own rules. Hastily annexed as a result of the famous saloon showdown in 1875-76, the area was subsequently replatted. West Street runs north/south to the right hand side, Spring Street parallels it to the immediate west, and these two streets along align with their continuations southward. Hamlin, reduced to the width of an alley, comes next, extending to 8th, and Spencer, isolated to the northwest, was also at one time called Hamlin Street. The east/west streets, 7th and 9th even today do not continue west of West Street. This area bore the brunt of the 1882 cyclone and was well settled, although largely in large parcels.

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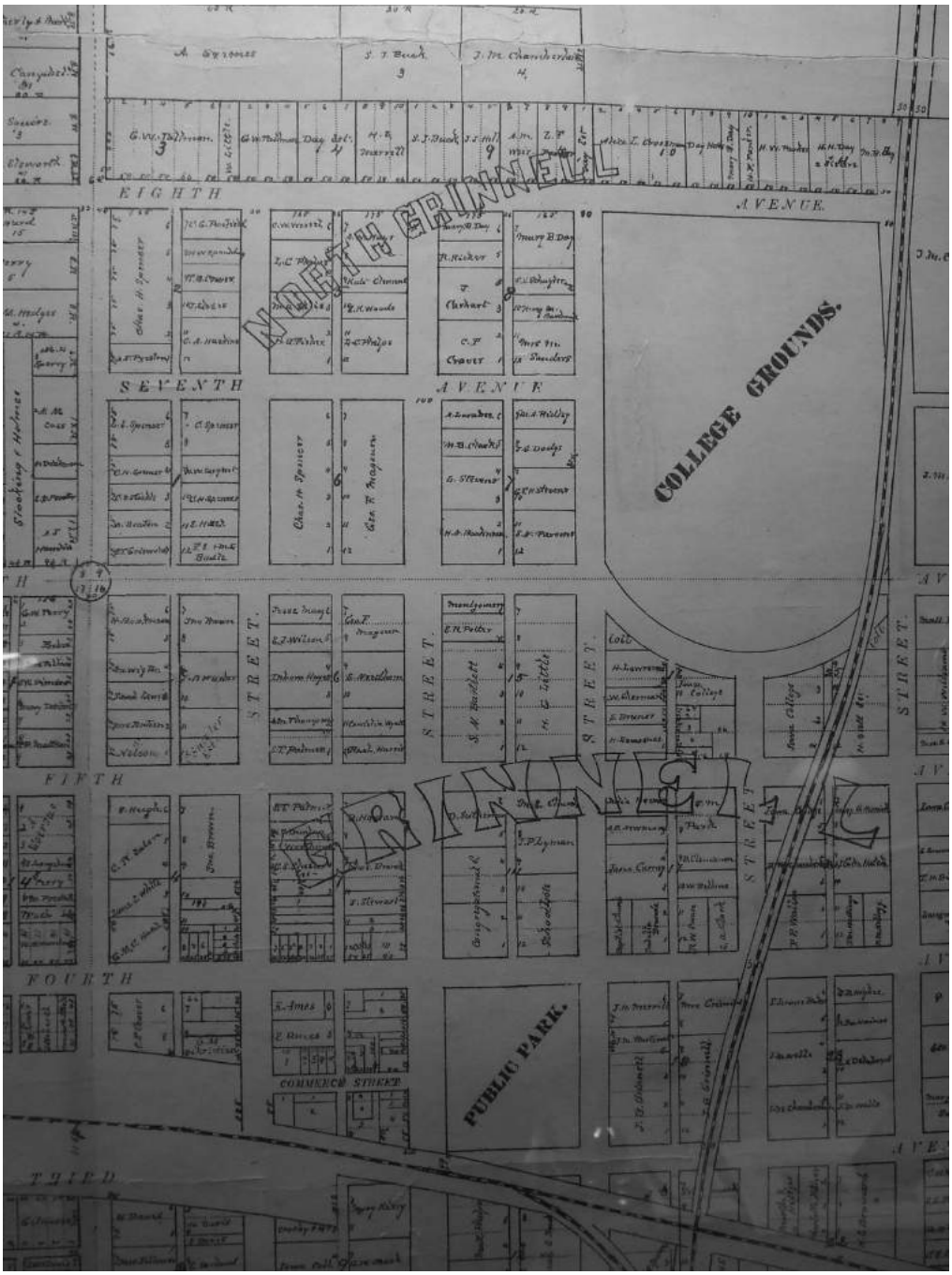

North Grinnell and Central Grinnell, Hamilton's Addition, 1879 Grinnell Plat Map

This section of the 1879 Plat Map depicts the core downtown, the college and the North Grinnell plat, lying north of 6th Avenue. Note that Park, Broad and Main streets all terminate at West 8th Street and only West Street continues out of town. The north side of West 8th Street is platted with small south-facing lots, and note again, that 8th does not continue east of the Central Railroad. Note also that the entire block bordered by 6th, 7th, Main and Broad is unplatted and undeveloped, in contrast to the blocks around it. North Grinnell remains platted with many double lot parcels, particularly on street corners. There was no Commercial Street as of 1879, an indication that the downtown buildings remained oriented east and west onto the named major streets.

The residential pattern evident as of 1855, that of the population center being located in the northwest quadrant of the town, was all the more apparent by 1880. Professor Kleinschmidt tabulated the numbers of family units on each street. On the basis of east/west numbered avenues, there were 30 families enumerated south of Fourth Avenue and 75 on

or north of that avenue. On north/south streets, 199 families lived west of or on Broad Street, while 123 lived east of that line.[1]

One great irony for Iowa College, relative to the 1882 cyclone, was that it had celebrated its freedom from debt just the year before. During 1880-81, $20,000 had been raised to erase the last of the deficit and the value of the college property was $250,000 (Iowa State Reporter [Waterloo, Iowa], July 13, 1881).

The cyclone directly impacted the northwest portion of the city, and specifically North Grinnell. The *Herald* reported that "west of Park street there were 46 houses totally destroyed and two more as nearly destroyed that they cannot be rebuilt. There were 22 persons killed within the same territory." The damage inventory of houses on "North Street" fronting south (Eighth Avenue?) was as follows:

1215 Main-Thos. Stafford House used as post-cyclone hospital

Pigmans-off the foundation
Tolman's-spared
Henry Days-rattled
John Merrill-thrown against Prof. Buck's
Prof. Buck's-front shattered, rear walls standing
Weaver's-gone
D. Smoke's-utterly demoralized

And these on the north end of Park Street:

Mrs. M. B. Day-shapless flat ruin, four college students saved in cellar
O. W. Ferguson-next south, the former Dodge Cottage, annihilated
Lucius Sanders-tossed 150 feet north, the barn was thrown 40 feet west across the alley
Prof. Herrick (formerly the S. S. Preson House), thrown across the street to the southeast
Mrs. Morris-the old Dodge House, kindling wood, also thrown southeast
G. F. H. Stevens, partly unroofed, moved 14 inches north, still a home
Prof. Parker (a new house), slightly injured, loss of trees and outhouse

(*Herald*, June 27, 1882).

The editors of the Herald were unimpressed with the square or hip-roof replacement house designs that were apparently ubiquitous. John Carhart T-plan cottage, being erected at 1214 Broad Street was praised to daring to be different. The editors said-"for variety's sake we are glad that Mr. Carhart is building a house with gables. It is four gabled and we like it better that the more pretentious square roof which nearly everybody seems to be adopting" The interior would not be plastered but rather sealing paper and wallpaper would be used (*Herald*, August 15, 1882).

The re-building served to push the residential area north. John Merrill, who would plat the several Merrill Additions north of Eleventh Avenue and west of Park Street, selected a new house site well north of the house that was lost. Implicit in his decision was the plan to extend Broad Street north of Eighth Avenue. With all of the financial assistance pouring into the city, the "Committee" undertook to rebuild the houses of those who were financially unable to replace their homes. Mrs. Ellis was one of the fortunate recipients (*Herald*, August 4, 15, 1882).

While it is somewhat too early to tell, Figure 2 shows the large re-investment in rebuilding following the 1882 cyclone. The Dubuque Herald noted that the hard times had fairly struck the struggling town, reporting "The little town of Grinnell had five business failures in ten days recently. About as good as Chicago." Sustained growth took place during the early 1890s and an upward trend followed what appears to have been a depressed period, 1906-07. Once all the numbers are in, we can consider looking at constant dollars and perhaps try some other statistical tools (standard deviations for example to average out the trend lines) (Dubuque *Herald*, February 28, 1883).

[1] Twenty-two families, including two living at the college, could not be placed and eight lived on alleys.

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The town's population steadily increased from its founding, but the growth began mid-Civil War and continued, aided no doubt by the addition of the north/south running second railroad in 1871. City and county lost residents during the hard economic times of 1873-75, but the stage was set for renewed growth during the next five years. Grinnell had, by this time, a well-established role as a railroad shipping center. While not a division point, it was the natural mid-point for east/west shipping between Des Moines and Iowa City and the town served a very large rural hinterland without any nearby competition. By 1880 it was the location of a large handful of feed and flour mills, was a distribution center for coal and lumber, and had dealers in livestock and grain. There were three wagon and carriage makers (Henry W. Spaulding, Albert H. Barnes, Whitnery W. Simons), the P. W. Leffler barbed wire works and the Craver & Steele Header Works (Iowa State Gazettere 1880-1881, pp. 292-293).

When the total cost of improvements were compared between the Cylcone year of 1882 and 1883, the *Herald* stressed that the higher 1882 figure, $224,000, "was for the repair of the damage wrought by the cyclone," while that of the succeeding year was all "in the way of steady growth." In continued "about $200,000 of the amount laid out in building last year was for replacing what the storm had destroyed, leaving only about $24,000 for additional growth." The comparison and analysis, if accurate, meant that 1883 was a "boom" year for growth and at this time, that word was not eschewed (*Herald*, January 4, 1883).

Lacking as of this time, any general sense of the total amount of financial relief that descended upon the city (and nearby Malcolm, also smashed up), one measure is the support that was forthcoming from Dubuque, alone. The mayor of Dubuque immediately organized a relief committee. Within a week, the city sent a delegation that delivered $500 to Malcolmand $1,732 to Grinnell's mayor, C. N. Perry (Dubuque *Herald*, June 22, 29, 1882).

As the shattered city recovered, the canvassers for the Iowa State Gazettere came to town. Their summary report in the 1882-1883 noted "It has recentlyb een visited by one of the most destructive tornados ever known to Eastern Iowa. Many fine buildings and private residences were completely destroyed. The city is, however, being rapidly rebuilt, fine business blocks being in course of erection of the site of those lately destroyed." The community was the shipping point for wheat, corn, oats and livestock. Thrice-weekly stages operated to Chester Centre, Senora and Sheridan Center (Iowa State Gazettere 1882-1883, pp. 424-427).

Grinnell was strictly an agricultural service and shipping center at this time. Save for a glove factory, all of its small industries served area farmers (carriages and wagons; Henry W. Spaulding, A. H. Barnes & Sons, Uriah Vanderveer: agricultural implements; Carhart & Sons, Craver & Steele, Miles Chafee [fanning mills]: barbed wire; Grinnell Wire Company and Leonidas Satchell: gloves by Morrison and McIntosh). There were three banks (Cooper & Beyer, First National and the Grinnell Savings Bank), three newspapers (the Signal, Independent and the Herald), and the Congregational and Methodist churches (Iowa State Gazettere 1882-1883, pp. 424-427).

"Wealth, population and manufacturing facilities" had increased during 1883. Iowa College completed two new halls (Blair, Chicago) at a cost of $55,000, a substantial proportion of the total growth figure. The college's comeback was unprecedented in the face of an "unparalleled in the history of colleges." Gothic was the style of choice. Absent from the 1883 progress report was much of any reference to industrial or downtown growth. Growth across the city was uneven, with the 3rd Ward accounting for $40,000 of the new improvements, 2nd Ward just $17,900, and 1st Ward (including the College's $55,000 for a total of $83,675) $28,675 (*Herald*, January 4, 1883).

One impetus to the growth was the development of a long-distance telephone system. By the end of 1883 the new lines were "connecting Grinnell with all important cities in central Iowa, and [were] promising to bring the city into connection with all eastern points." Note the it was these eastern links that were valued. Those points had been the point of origin for most of the town's emigrant population and the source of funds for rebuilding the demolished college. Reflective of this development, a new telephone exchange cost $7,500 (*Herald*, January 4, 1883).[2]

[2] North-south long-distance lines were apparently more of an after-thought. Eddyville, Ottumwa and Centerville, were linked with Grinnell only in mid-1897 The *Des Moines Capital* noted "It readily enables one to converse with parties in New York, Boston and Washington. It is quite a convenience for people along the line, and Eddyville is the only small town thus favored south of Grinnell" (*Des Moines Capital*, July 26, 1897).

The 1884 improvements produced two substantial business blocks (Spencer, Main & 4th, Child's stone block, Broad) and a major Spaulding, Phillips & Co. expansion. The new "elegant residences" included "a large number of of moderate sized dwellings." No effort was made to tally a total figure and the ward-based system of organizing a year-end report was dropped (*Herald*, January 14, 1885).

The local barb wire factory became a casualty of the patent legal battles. In late 1885 the Southern U. S. Circuit Court at Leavenworth, Kansas, ruled in favor of the Washburn and Moen Manufacturing Company, fixing the indenture owned by the Grinnell firm at $24,126. Any further production was to determine the royalty owed once a month and any expansion of production was prohibited (Des Moines *Capital*, December 18, 1885).

No end-of-year progress reports have yet been found for the years 1886-1890. The 1891 report notes the dullness of 1887-88. It appears to be true that Grinnell nicely weathered the hard economic times of the early-mid-1880s and the cyclone might have perversely aided them in doing this. A similar pattern emerges during the 1890s when growth does not appear to have been diminished significantly by the 1893-93 national panic. If these trends are determined to be factual, then there is a rich potential to look at the local architectural design trends from the standpoint of comparative rarity. Other communities will simply have have a similar unbroken architectural legacy.

Reflective of its core settlement heritage, the New England Society was permanently organized in the spring of 1886. This was a national organization and Des Moines was the venue for its formation, but the impetus came from Grinnell. Former state Governor William Larrabee was president, J. B. Grinnell, "of Vermont" was one of six vice-presidents (Des Moines *Capital*, March 20, 1886).[3]

The Iowa State Gazeteer for 1887-1888 described a somewhate more diversified Grinnell industrial base. The firm of Craver, Steele and Austin, producers of the Randolph Header and the Steele Mower, enjoyed an international (Europe and South America) and national market. The Spaulding & Company and Morrison Glove Factory both had developed broader than local markets. Wagner & Company made pumps, Lewis L. Andrews made carriages and Charles N. Perry manufactured agricultural implements. The Grinnell Board of Trade, an early version of a chamber of commerce, actively supported "all propositions looking toward the advancement of business interests in the town." By this time were were four banks (First National, Merchants National, Grinnell [State] Savings Bank, and C. W. H. Beyer [private]) (Iowa State Gazeteer 1887-1888, pp. 593-96).

The winters of 1888-89 and 1889-1890 were so nearly snow less that a frame toboggan chute, built in 1888, was finally pulled down in earl May 1890 and the lumber was reused. There wasn't much rain either and by mid-year 1890 the lake water level was down by five to six feet. The *Herald* had reported the previous fall that "the water [supply] question is again getting a serious one hereabouts. A great many wells and cisterns are dry and water for stock is scarce, There has not been a good shower since early in the fall" (*Herald*, December 3, 1889; May 9, July 25, 1890).

The city gained two new church buildings in 1889, with both the Methodist and Baptist congregations raising up new buildings. The latter was apparently something of a watershed in terms of quality and design, given the extensive praise that was heaped upon it and its designer, architect C. A. Williams of Webster City. The former Baptist Church was moved to a point east of town and became the local National Guard armory. Regarding the new church edifice, the *Herald* stated:

> When this shall have been completed and the outside encased with pressed brick and finsished with stone trimmings, not only the Baptists but the people generally will have a building to which they can point with pride. As it stands with its spire pointing to the heavens it is a monument of the self-sacrifice of the members, and of the liberality of the citizens of this progressive city.

Even more to point, the same source judged the church design to be a "Statewide model of beauty and finish." And yet again, as the church was nearly finished in mid-1890: "As the Baptist church approaches completion it assumes more and more those architectural proportions which show off its elegance and beauty." The *Herald* editor lauded a local theatrical

[3] The Grinnell Association of Congregational Churches attested to the link between that church body and the town/founder. It held its annual meeting in Valley Junction in August 1898 (Des Moines *Daily News*, April 12, 1898).

show but made an interesting reference to the reputation of Grinnell's residence, noting "even the icy indifference characteristic of the typical Grinnell audience was forced to yield…." The whistle at the Header Works was for the first time always accurate, being timed on Prof. Buck's astromical clocks at the college. Science had found a most practical application and the entire community responded to the now-accurate steam whistling (*Herald*, February 5, 8, May 17, June 21, July 19, October 15, 1889; July 11, 1890).

> There was a severe rental housing shortage by early spring 1889.
>
> The real estate men of Grinnell are the most over taxed set of men in the city. There is a persistent call for houses and the supply has been entirely exhausted. Outside of a couple of large residences, it can be safely said there isn't a rentable house in the city. This doesn't look as tho Grinnell has suffered to any very alarming extent on account of the many families seeking houses on the Pacific Coast.

The Pacific Coast reference is repeated in mid-1890 when a retrospective evaluation of the annual school age census for the years 1884-89 was being analized. The driving force behind the article was local hopes for a city population of 3,500 or for the even more optimistic, 4,000 residents. Chart II (see page **) showed stable or declining student headcounts for the demographic aged five to 21 years, with the lowpoint, 1887, showing just 975 young people (this represented only 76 fewer persons than the year previous, or an eight percent decline). This low figure represeted "the great Pacific slope," certainly a reference to out-migration to the west generally. Since that time, the number was increasing but the 1888 and 1889 headcounts remained just below those of pre-1886. The *Herald* editors warned that given the known relationship between the 1885 student count (1,058) and the state census figure (2,321), residents should not anticipate that the 1890 federal census would show any more "than a dozen above or below the figures of '85" and that the fall 1890 headcount would produce just a "small increase" over that of 1889. Their projection was correct, the 1890 figure was 3,333, but the school age total was the highest ever for the city, although just two more than the 1884 count (*Herald*, April 9, July 18, 1890).

While this historical context has its focus upon the non-commercial buildings of Grinnell, the complete destruction by fire of the core of the downtown cannot be ignored. It was the second great devastation and the loss and its immediate replacement marked both the psyche and the architecture of Grinnell. The fire occurred on June 11-12, 1889. The fire was caused by railroad track friction and sparks and a strong southwest wind spread the flames. Only a reversal of the winds saved the commercial buildings north of 4th Avenue. The replacement of the lost business blocks totalled $125,000 in 1889 (*Herald*, June 22, 1934).

The fire brought in two major Cedar Rapids contractors and a bevy of new architects. It necessarily resulted in a modern and much more fireproof downtown, with larger buildings and a considerable reshuffling of the pre-existing parcels. The new buildings were much better designed, featured elaborate pressed brick fronts with metal cornices, and stone trim. Small commercial buildings evolved into blocks with considerable additional professional office space being incorporated into the upper floors. The sheer scale of the rebuilding effort defies appreciation. Within two months of the fire, the *Herald* could report

> The foundations for all the buildings are nearing completion, and all hands can soon commence making the buildings climb skyward…Material is arriving in the Rock Island and Central yards by the train load. The number of car loads used in the construction of these new buildings willl run into a good round sum by the time they are under roof (*Herald*, August 16, 1889).

Table I tallied just four of the contractors, yet the total carload counts and they were impressive figures. All of the contractors took pains to purchase building materials locally, brick in particular. The local brickyards were more than overwhelmed although they were able to substantially ramp up production. The *Herald* noted:

> Brick have been brought to this place from nearly every town in a circuit of fifty miles, but the McHouse brick made at this place are the best low-priced brick, color, shape, size and everything taken into account, that have put in an appearance. This is another victory for home manufacture. McHouse is making things hum at his yard (*Herald*, August 8, 1889).

Heavy timber trusses and millwork was also locally available:

> The Grinnell planing mills are the liveliest establishment in the city at the present time. Timbers for the new buildings are sticking out of all the doors and windows and in fact the vicinity presents the appearance of a lumber yard. The firm has endeavored to treat everybody alike, so as to keep things moving, on all the buildings, and when the large number of buildings under way is taken into consideration it is no boys play to size up all the joists and make doors and window frames (Herald August 20, 1889).

Two building materials supply problems caused some delay. Ornamental face brick was the first, noted in early October and plate glass was by far the more serious and more broadscale. The glass necessarily was needed to reopen new stores and to evacuate the temporary stalls in the park (*Herald*, October 8, 25, 1889).

Table I: Carloads of Building Material Used to Rebuild Grinnell's Downtown (*Herald*, January 3, 1890)[4]

Material	**R. G. Coutts**[5]	**George Sampson**	**Marcus Hall (also bought much material of Coutts)**	**Brown & Zike**
Stone	Anamosa-13 cars Cedar Valley-5 Knoxville-5 Local dealers-64	42 cars		16 cars
Pressed brick	33,000 brick	6 cars		80,000 brick
Common brick, from other towns	26 cars	20 cars		20 cars (total(
Common brick, home-made	190,000 brick (and what he burned himself)	322,000 brick	80,000 brick	
Sand	63 cars	42 cars	7 cars	25 cars
Lime	14 cars	2 cars	2 cars	5 cars
Cement/stucco	2 cars			

The rebuilt downtown showed well to visitors and Grinnellians were proud of their rebuilding efforts:

> Visitors to the city are at once impressed with improvements that are being pushed in Grinnell since the fire. They are high in their praise of the metropolitan appearance of all buildings. One stranger was heard to remark that there wasn't a town in the state twice the size of Grinnell that could show as many pressed brick fronts. It shows that our business men feel a degree of confidance in the future of the city.

The *Herald* editors were so bold as to proclaim the disaster "a great thing to Grinnell," noting that the new blocks "are finished in good taste and make a fine appearance, quite in contrast with the old shells destroyed" (*Herald*, September 17, December 6, 1889).

The rebuilding brought many construction workers temporarily to town but the housing shortage reported the previous April was all the more acute due to a continued influx of new residents:

> Houses to rent in this place are a thing of the past. Grinnell has always had a steady increase in population by strangers moving here to educate their children, but this fall proves to be an exception as to

[4] LaSalle pressed brick was used in the Chafee Building, Monroe pressed brick was used in the façade of the Stock Exchange. St. Louis pressed brick was used for the Foster & Bailey Block (*Herald*, January 3, 1890).

[5] Another report credits Coutts with employing 53 men for many months with a daily payroll of $100, and consuming 50 cars of stone, 30 of brick, 10 of lime and 65 of sand. Coutts paid $2,000 in rail freight charges (Herald, December 6, 1889).

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number. Real estate agents are having daily inquiries for property, both to rent and purchase (*Herald*, October 4, 1889).

The downtown fire brought with it an established fire district as well as a standardized system of sidewalk grades (and all new sidewalks too). One municipal advancement, the advance of the city post office from that of a city of the second to the third class, was an announcement that came even as the smoke was still rising up from the destroyed postoffice (*Herald*, June 28, July 5, November 8, 1889).

Electricity wasn't new to Grinnell as of 1889 but something substantial changed in residential service. A new system of power lines was instituted and a call was made for new residential patrons by the electrical company. The major street intersections were already lighted and four additional lamps were installed. The City Council examined plans and specifications for a Union Passenger depot. The college trustees also made an important decision in early September. They committed the college to the construction of a central heating plant for all of the college buildings. This decision meant that any new buildings would not require its own furnace and heating system (*Herald*, February 8, September 10, November 19, 1889).

The housing shortage of 1889 was even greater a year later.

> Not only are a great many of our citizens hustling night and day for a house to rent, but strangers are here daily on the same errand. There are several instances brought to our notice where parties foolishly disposed of their homes, because they were offered a good price, and are now forced to give up their places, and they have found it impossible to procure a house of any kind. Mr. Welch, who sold his home on High St., a short time ago, would like to have his purchaser cancell his bargain mighty well. He sold his property thinking he could rent cheaper than he could maintain a home of his own. It has only taken a few weks to teach him different. He has hunted for a house high and low, and after a a fruitless search he has concluded the only way out of the pinch is to go work and build another home. There are several families whose leases have expired and the owners will not release the property because [they are] wanting it for their own use. The coming season will see many new homes erected throughout the city, which will probably have a tendency to lessen the house demand. Material is being hauled for those new buildings, and as soon as the weather permits every available carpenter will be putting in his best licks. 1890 promises to be a busy season in Grinnell in the way of improvements. There will be some tight sqeezing until new quarters are provided (*Herald*, February 28, 1890).[6]

One of the landmark new house designs was that of Dr. Wiley. Its local description is the only known use of the stylistic "Queen Anne." The reference is also a reminder that the noteworthy residences of North Grinnell originally were also found between Fifth and Sixth avenues, at least on Park and Broad streets. The *Herald* reported:

> We were shown the plans and specifications of the new residence that will be erected by Dr. E. B. Wiley the coming season on his lots on Broad street, between 5th and 6th avenue. They show a handsome structure of the Queen Anne style. The new structure will adorn that portion of the city in a handsome manner. Mr. H. K. Holsmen, a student of Iowa College is the architecdt, and his work shows that he is no novice… (*Herald*, February 25, 1890).

Drought also meant dusty streets. The city's first for-profit street sprinkling enterprise, offered by Amos Thompson in 1887 had failed due to an inadequate machine 'that furnished scarcely enough water to the man to drink, who drove the team." Will Arthur started a stock subscription drive, with shares costing $15, and promised "a jam-up metropolitan sprinkler." The company went into operation in mid-June, the sprinkler team being "followed by boys whose feet had not seen water for many a long day." The same drought cycle was disastrous to Dakota Territory farmers and C. F. Childs coordinated a local subscription fund that raised money to buy corn to feed the Dakotian's starving stock. Four full carloads of corn were shipped out of the city between early March and April 1 (*Herald*, March 7, 21, April 1, May 2, 16, June 13, 1890).

[6] While apparently a prime candidate as a potential house-builder, Welch does not appear on the list of new house builders for 1890+.

The final vestige of the downtown fire of 1889, a heat-cracked display window in the office of Brainard & Wilson, wasn't fixed until early September 1890. Local photographer * Walker had taken a photo of the row of shanties that had lined the west side of the park, used as temporary stores during the post-fire rebuilding. These had been taken down per in response to a City Council deadline of December 1, 1889. There was a flurry of shack-moving as opportunists gained new stables or outbuildings. In early June a windstorm had completed the destruction of the trees along that side of the park, the trees having long shown "the effects of the fire" in their scarred foliage (*Herald*, October 8, 1889; January 7, June 6, September 5, 1890).

The Spaulding Manufacturing Company was untouched by the fire but at year's end, rumors were in local circulation about its future. In late December it was announced that Craver, Steele & Austin would take over the company's production, while Mr. Spaulding was to be in charge of sales. There was also a new top line of vehicles that would be produced and Frank Tiffanay was brought to the city to superintend that production. The *Herald* thought "this enlargement of the business promises to bring many new families to Grinnell." The next rumor was true. The company was completely reorganized as the Spaulding Manufacturing Company, with partners M. Snyder, William Miles, Jr. and H. W. Spaulding. The former Spaulding works on Main Street were abandoned in favor of the vacated Header Works (the most recent tenants, Craver, Steele Austin were off to the Chicago area) were to be refitted. The new company product would be carriages and wagons suitable for the wholesale trade, a major departure. The old plant shut down operations on October 25 and reopened in its new location on December 2. It was clearly a near-miss for Grinnell (*Herald*, December 27, 1889; September 26, December 2, 1890).

The year closed with a warning to residents that a city ordinance prohibited throwing rubbish of any kind into the streets and alleys and that the penalty per offense was $5.00. It was also noted that "…some citizens have located their barns on the line of the public streets [presumably the cross-streets] and are using them as a barnyard into which to throw the daily cleanings from their stables." The fine was "more than the privilege is worth, even to a thoughless man" (*Herald*, December 27, 1889).

The *Herald* offered no end-of-year progress tally, and in consequence no total cost for the 1890 improvements, but the largest number of new houses, some 35 houses, went up that year. At least a dozen of these were built in the northwest quadrant (west of Park, north of Fifth), while at least ten went up on High or east and below Fifth. The other quadrants accounted for at least nine houses. The city was growing and as early as mid-May the *Herald* begged "allow us to report that Grinnell has a boom with whiskers on it." Much of the new residential construction was for rental purposes. As early as mid-February the same source observed: "The heavy demand for rentable houses will probably induce others to erect cottages for renting purposes the coming season." By early April "numerous strangers were daily seeking homes in our city." Growth was so substantial and the turnover in lot ownership so complete that a new city plat map was required, and Ben Ricker set about making up a revised map that would show the new additions and changes in ownership. The 1890 federal census was a disappointment for the city. There had been hopes to break at least 3,500 and others had even more ambitious goals. The Marshalltown Times-Republican, always antagonistic to Grinnell's interests, chided the community for its low headcount. Founder J. B. Grinnell was sufficiently umbridged to respond and in doing so he offered his own comprehensive perspective on the city's growth, since 1860:

> Grinnell is in the habit of claiming growth by virtue of early organic prohibition and the presence of a college, and not by county patronage or railroad aid in returns for liberality and rare public enterprise. The following figures establish a just claim to growth in the past and become a happy augury for the future. By the official census the population of Grinnell was in 1860 392; in 1870, 1,482; in 1880, 2,415; in 1890, 3,333. That makes a gain in population for the last decade of 38 percent, which would have been a much greater percent but for the temporary absence of hundreds who could not be technically counted under the stringent rules of the enumeration. The statement in the [Marshalltown] *Times-Republican* can not be full without the above figure nor will the fact as to relative growth be known without a correlation and comparison with other towns in the state new and of kindred rank.
>
> Our people seem prospered in all their material, educational and religious institutions, if a small municipal debt, demand for houses, and sales of realty are the proper indices of prosperity. The painful incidents of the cyclone of 1882 with its wasted homesd the death of forty persons, and the disastrous fire

> of a year ago, bring occasion not only to wonder at restoration, but should move to sincere gratitude for a home more marked for adornment than for increase in population and business.
>
> J. B. Grinnell

Who the uncounted were we are left to ponder, perhaps they were the infamous "Pacific Slopers." Grinnell is a bit disingenuous to claim an apparent steady population growth in the decade preceding 1890, as we have seen, if anything it consisted of a higher rate of population retention during a period when most Iowa communities lost ground, along with a bit of a building back that started in late 1889. Meanwhile the school-age population pressure was a problem in the lowermost grades and the 8th Grade was shifted to the Central School in March 1890 (*Herald*, February 14, March 21, April 1, May 16, July 29, September 2, 16, 1890).[7]

> A veritable boom has struck the south end of High Street. Besides the houses that have been commenced, there will be others started soon. Yesterday Mr. Richard Farley purchased two desirable lots on the corner of Hamilton avenue and High street, just south of Mr. Westbrook's. Mr. Farley will immediately commence the erection of a commodeous residence thereon. These lots are as fine a building spot as there is in the city. The people up that way will soon be clamoring for an Electric street railway (*Herald*, March 7, 1890).

> The scarcity of "houses to rent" is very great, and is the cause of a great deal of discomfort. A stranger from Ames by the name of Condit, was in the city this week trying to secure a house, wishing to bring his family to Grinnell for the purpose of giving them a schooling, and an influential farmer near Searsboro was in the city on the same mission, but both parties were unable to get any kind of house. April first,--which will be next Tuesday—is the set time for a great many changes in place of residence. To illlustrate in what an embarassing position some of our citizens are we cite the following: Mr. Chas. Lane, brakeman on the C. & M. road, is compelled to move April 1st, to let Jake Bailey, the owner of the property, get in his own home, beause Baily is compelled to vacate Geo. Weaver's house as Mr. Weaver must have his own property so that he can vacate the Benson house because Mr. W. H. Barker has leased that property, which had been promised to him next Tuesday because he must vacate the dr. Harris' tenement, the first of next week so that Mr. H. B. Lain's family can be "at home" there, as they are forced out of the Toplif house, because that said piece of property was purchased by Mr. Jim Norris, so he would be ready to be shoved out of the Anderson house, because Mr. Anderson is clamoring for his own residence. The only way out of the difficulty is for Chas. Lane and family to move into the G. & M. coach and allow the caravan to move up a notch (*Herald*, March 28, 1890).

The city government had grown large enough to require its own storage yard for the street equipment, so land was purchased between City Hall and the Illinois Central tracks for a fenced lot. A major street improvement was the extension of 8th Avenue eastwards from the Central Railroad crossing. The *Herald* observed "It is a great convenience to that part of the city. Until it was opened, there was no way to get from the northwest to the northeast part of the city to except to come around south of the campus." In what was an early indication of a more distinctive architecture, the new Baptist Church, clad in its imported pressed brick veneer, was signaled out (*Herald*, March 25, June 30, 1890).

> Capt. Paul Poyton has heard of our Lake Lyanza [sic, Nyanza], and wishes to give one of his novel entertainments within its banks. He claims the exposition can be given in five feet of water with a surface of 200 by 200 feet. His performance consists of an exciting and novel combat, illustrating torpedo warefare [sic] in connection with his dress, also all kinds of aquatic sports such as foot races and pole games by experts

[7] The country schools were raising up flagpoles, flying the national flag and conducting morning patriotic exercises. Not to be outdone, South School in Grinnell did the same (Herald, March 17, 1890).

> while standing upright on the surface of the water in the new patent overshoes (*Herald*, April 4, 1890).

> Building operations have commenced early this season, and it promises to be a notable year for residence building. There is a lively demand for choice lots throughout the city, and they are daily passing into the possession of parties who are buying for the sole purpose of building on them. While the demand for tenement houses is more noticeable this spring than any previous year, the majority of the houses that have commenced and those that are contemplated, will be occupied by the parties who are putting them up. Arthur Baggs was the first to get a hustle on himself, and already has his house completed and it will be dry enough for occupancy in a few days. George Agard has commenced operations on his new residence which is under the supervision of Mr. Phil Streck. Arthur Triplett is raising the frame work of his new residence, on Lake View hill, which will be a large and well proportioned house. The main part will be two stories with a spacious L. Mr. Richard Farley, who was the lucky man to capture the two fine lots at the corner of Hamilton ave. and High St. on Lake View hill, has a force of men at work putting in the foundation for his new residence. Mr. J. C. Baggs has commenced operations on his lot on north Main Dt., and will soon have a new residence to call home. Two new residences by Mr. Bryan near the Episcopal church, and the fine tenement cottage that will immediately be commenced by Mr. A. J. Topliff west of the Header works, makes a good outlook for the season. The work of building the large warehouse and cold storage structure of the Grinnell Produce Company, is progressing as the weather permits. Work on E. S. Bartlett's new meat market building on 4th avenue will soon be commenced, and the finishing of the Baptist church will add a big item on the way of labor (*Herald*, April 4, 1890).

> Mr. G. M. C. Hatch, who erected the pleasant and home-like tenement row on 4th avenue has found there is a constant demand for these apartments. There is a class of renters who care nothing for garden spots if they can only be located near the business portion of the city. These tenement houses, constructed for several families, are arranged so that eac family has a nice little grass spot in front and bacy yard room enough for all practical purposes, and are independent of each other. The Hatch row has become so popular that the proprietor has decided to erect another, and the new house will be built on the east side of Main street between 5th and 6th avenues, avery desirable spot. The new structure could not have a more appropriate name than "Hotel Hatch" (*Herald*, April 11, 1890).

> Dr. Bert Holyoke who is in the city for the purpose of disposing of some of his city lots here, says he never saw, during his many years' residence in this city, such a lively demand for building spots (*Herald*, April 11, 1890).

On the industrial front, the firm of Craver, Steel & Austin, makers of agricultural equipment, parlayed their success into a relocation to near Pullman, Illinois, just outside of Chicago. Obviously the Spaulding rumor about the company had been just that. The Grinnell Buggy Company was organized under the shadow of the successful Spaulding Company, with John and Edgar Stahl, along with William Fickes, heading that new firm (*Herald*, March 21, 1890).

> A young man desires a home in a Christian family, to work for his board and attend school. Enquire of Snider & Co. (*Herald*, December 20, 1889)

The bicycle craze very likely induced the laying down of broader and improved sidewalks. As the Herald noted, a bicycle on an unpaved road was not so very useful most of the year. "since a wheel is of little account on roads in this region a considerable part of the year." The popularity of the "wheel" had resulted in the formation of a local club within the past few years, but it had faded away. One of its adopted rules had required the walking of "wheels" within the

business district during business hours. That rule was long forgotten and city-wide, pedestrians were jousting for sidewalk space. The editors encouraged the latter to "Never dodge a wheelman. Give him half the walk, but don't budge. If he is coming up from behind or in front, there is no danger of collision unless you make it by dodging." The riders were warned that unless they ceased their racing on the sidewalks, they would soon be completely banned from using them at all (*Herald*, April 25, 1890).

> It has been a number of years since the last map of the city was issued, and so much property has changed ownership that the old map has almost become worthless. Ben Ricker is adding the finishing strokes to his new plat and it will soon be ready for distribution. Ben has been very careful to make all the changes, and he believes that he has a map that is clear of errors (*Herald*, May 6, 1890).

The 1891 annual report verbally painted a very useful descriptive summary of Grinnell and its special features:

GRINNELL'S GROWTH
The Past Year One of Unusual Building Activity
Over One Hundred Thousand Dollars Put into Improvements
in New Dwellings, Brick Blocks, Additions, etc.

> Go where you will, the testimoney is the same---"Grinnell is the handsomest town in Iowa." Its fine brick blocks, tis many beautiful residences surrounded by large and carefully kept lawns, its magnificent college buildints, its level, well-kept streets so luxuriantly shaded by elm and mapel,--all these combine to give the town a beauty and refreshing appearance that never fail to elicit favorable opinion from visitors. Her people, too, are thrifty and enterprising. To the *HERALD* no other town has ever seemed so homelike, so marked by a class of citizens whose aims were high and whose broad fellowship so inviting.
>
> The growth of the town has been gradual. No mushroom here. From 1854 to 1892 is thirty-eight years. For so long a time has Grinnell been a thriving little city. A steady growth all this time has been a chief feature (*Herald*, January 1, 1892).

New houses talled 25 in 1891 (*Herald*, December 31, 1895).

Given the hiatus in local building, 1887-88, Grinnell's unbroken pattern of growth was recalibrated to a start point in 1889. At the end of 1892, the *Herald* again looked back:

> Of one thing Grinnell people have always been proud—the city's constant and steady growth. Grinnell has never had a boom, but every year makes a steady progress in wealth. In no town in Iowa are the homes more beautiful, or the business blocks more modern and substantial in architecture. Nor are better or more cultured people to be found anywhere under the blue canopy of heaven. For four years the city had new residences and business blocks erected aggregating over $150,000 annually. While the growth is not remarkable, it has been at least substantial and very gratifying to residents of Grinnell….While the number of new residences put up has been but thirty most of them have been of exceptional beauty. All have been built neat and comfortable, a handsome addition to our city's numerous neat and attractive houses.
>
> The steady growth of Iowa College is another source of gratification to its numerous friends. It has become no inconsiderable factor in the growth of our little city, being the cause of bringing among us a large number of desirable people who become residents and help to swell our industrial advantages…

The year 1892 witnessed the completion of two substantial fireproof business blocks (Beyer, Gifford & Manly), a new depot and the first public works building effort, a sewer system. The five college buildings "are models of architecture, which, with the beautiful campus, are among the chief attractions to Grinnell." New houses in 1892 totalled 29 (*Herald*, January 3, 1894; December 31, 1895).

The effects of the national financial panic were referenced at the close of 1893, but local building continued. The *Herald*, looking back, observed "The best of it is that there is to be no cessation of work, notwithstanding close times. Probably twenty houses will be built next season and the water works will take a boom." Total improvements were just $84,000 and $53,000 of that figure represented residential improvements. Still 15 new houses, valued at $23,500 were built, and 20 were substantially improved ($17,250) and a number of barns were built. So residential improvements accounted for half of the total improvements. There were even public improvements, $8,000 expended for the waterworks and sewer system, and commercial and industrial growth was substantial, notably $8,000 expended by the private electric company, $16,000 expended in buildings and equipment by Spaulding Manufacturing Company and the building of two new business blocks on Main Street (*Herald*, January 2, 1894).

One casualty of the depression was the new men's gym. The campaign to raise funds for the $40,000 cost began in 1892 and plans were accepted, construction to have started in the spring of 1894. "The financial depression of 1893, however, gave a check to the movement, which it seemed impossible to over come, subscriptions ceased to come in, and the enterprise postponed from year to year, seemed doomed to failure." The project was reconstituted in 1898 and a building resulted two years later (*Herald*, January 12, 1900).

The building year of 1894 was termed "A Year of History" with "more handsome residences [built] than ever before" and total improvements were valued at nearly $200,000, a remarkable turn-around from 1893. When the annual list was presented to the public, the *Herald* noted that "the building has been so quietly and unobtrusively carried on that doubtless many will be surprised as the amount. A gratifying feature of the year's improvement is the large proportion of first-class dwellings which have been built." The latter class of construction comprised over half of the total expended on residential building and remodeling. New houses talled to 28, for a total investment of $70,400. The most expensive was former mayor Morse's $15,000 house, said to be "the handsomest and most modern" housein the city. The average new house cost was $2,514 although 13 houses cost $1,000 or less. Improved houses numbered 26 and represented an investment of just $9,130, or an average cost of $350. Fourteen new barns were built, 11 of which were separately listed and cost $2,175, or an average of about $200. The other city improvements were dominated by the city's waterworks expenditure of $30,000, five new business blocks including a hotel that cost $40,000, and Spaulding Company improvemens of $7,500. Looking forward to 1895, the *Herald* predicted that

> so many plans are being made that certainly some of them will not fail of realization…and the probability is that the outlay on improvements will even exceed that of the past year…At least a dozen new residences for the early spring are in comtemplation, some of which have already begun. Among the possibilities also are a new school house, a new Methodist Church and a new Y.M.C.A. building. Should these all go up Grinnell will witness a building boom that will make the working men happy, put a large amount of money into circulation and make times the liveliest they have been for years (*Herald*, January 1, December 31, 1895).

The new water mains were partly responsible for the rush in house building. The first mains were laid running west "on the avenue" (Broad Street) as far as John Goodfellows; west on 6th Avenue to J. C. Walker's; on Main from 2nd Avenue to Professor Buck's; and on 3rd Avenue east from Broad to East Street, and then north along East. House construction on High Street on lots purchased by C. R. Morse was predicted by the felling of large trees in mid-May and the *Herald* reported "a small sized boom" in house sales at the same time (*Herald*, May 15, 18, 1894).[8]

All was not apparently rosy given the title for Company K's annual ball at its armory, the "Hard Times Ball" (*Herald*, January 9, 1894).

The year 1895 was nearly as good for improvements, totalling $175,000 with 32 new houses built (costing $70,000). The *Herald* reported at year's end:

[8] The nearby town of Brooklyn was sued for adjacent property damages when it raised up its 90 foot high water tower. It was a concern that "the Grinnell tower is 130 feet high just completed and the outcome [of the Brooklyn case] will be watched withinterest" (Sioux County *Herald* [Orange City, Iowa], July 25, 1894).

> Grinnell people have every reason to be proud of the steady growth of the city in material wealth. Though we have no citizen who may be called rich, our numbers of well-to-do, thrifty citizens is only limited by the size of the census, and every one of them is proud of the beauty, the thrift and the culture of the little town he calls his home.
>
> Grinnell has never had a boom. It does not increase in population with the rapidity of many othe cities, but, the steadiness with which progress is made toward convenience, utility and beauty is the envy of numerous neighbors.

The most expensive new house was valued at $12,000 and the newspaper called out fifteen of the most beautiful new homes for special mention (*Herald*, December 31, 1895).

A major development was the opening of East 8th Street, east beyond the railway. Mrs. Hobart owned the critical piece of real estate and she was induced by overtures from Mrs. Williamsand Mr. Kellenberger to sell it for that purpose. The work would be accomplished in the spring and the improvement "will add something to the city and make 8th Avenue one of the finest in the city" (*Herald*, January 5, 1895).

An industrial recruit, the F. H. Reed Poultry Packing House, relocated from Marengo and by 1899 had 75 employees and was "the heaviest shipper of live poultry in the United States to New York Markets" with three to six carloads departing weekly (*Herald*, October 6, 1899).

The First Methodist Church was dedicated on April 26, 1896. An unnamed resident wondered why Grinnell didn't use burned clay to solve its paving problem. The writer noted that this material had long been used as ballast along the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad trackage and was an excellent material (Des Moines *Capital*, April 22, December 23, 1896).[9]

The new school was named in honor of Professor L. F. Parker, of Iowa College in recognition of his having served as the first "superintendent" of the public school system in earlier years. This accolade reflected both the closeness of town and gown and a willingness to deviate from the national norms of school naming. The award of the school building contract to an unnamed Council Bluffs firm for $8,244, was not well received locally. The annual school census in the fall of 1896 tallied 1,045 potential students (468 males, 562 females) (Des Moines *Daily News*, September 22, October 7, 189; Des Moines *Daily Iowa Capital*, August 17, 1896).

The new free mail house delivery district in the city was set with the following boundaries; 9th Avenue to the north, Summer Street to the east, Harrison Street to the south, and Reed Street to the west. The *Herald* asked its subscribers to provide their house numbers so that their papers could be mailed in lieu of being separately distributed. Evidently the house number system had not been important to the newspaper prior to this time. A system of street letter boxes was also innaugurated, effective July 16. Three of these were located at Broad and 6th, Broad and 8th and Park and 6th (*Herald*, June 22, 1897).

No annual reports have yet been found for the years 1896-97. The 1898 report again looked back to the 1889 fire and made the claim that the average total improvements since the fire had figured to $125,000 or 16 percent annually of the total city property valuation. The year 1898 fell well short of this average, totalling just $56,930. The sharp decline was explained away by the construction of a single business block and no great public expenditures. Just 16 new houses were built, with a total cost of $27,500 and an average cost of $1,718. Remodelings totalled just 18, the total expenditure was $12,250, for an average of just $680. Still, it was noted "our mechanics and laboring men have been busy and it is a fact that laborers have frequently been hard to find as everyone who wanted to work had a job. Perhaps a telling indicator of somewhat more stringent public purse strings was the stated hope that "the paving question" would be substantially addressed during the forthcoming year. It wasn't until 1909 that the first "paving" was done and it wasn't brick paving.). C. C. Keistes put acetylene gas lights in his store and all took due note of what was "one of the best lighted places in the city." The most important real estate deal of the year and one that would bear considerable residential fruit in subsequent

[9] A most interesting annual event was the observance of Confederate veteran Phillip Heishman's release from a prison camp. Heishman lived just outside the city and several hundred area veterans and their families were feted each year (Des Moines *Capital*, June 24, 1896).

years, was the purchase by G. W. Merrill of 13 acres of property in North Grinnell, soon platted as Merrill's Addition (*Herald*, January 7; July 19, December 13, 1898).

The drums of war beat, reached a crescendo and then ebbed away tragically. Company K leased the third floor of the opera house for an armory in early January 1898. The rising hysteria of the Spanish American War was apparently less than fully shared within the unit. It was reported that "the war news put a damper on the enthusiasm of the new recruits and but four enlistments were made" after war was declared in early April. The company mobilized, ended up in camp near Jacksonville, Florida, and its members were prostrated with typhoid fever. In a double tragedy, Captain Arthur C. Norris was among the sick and his most healthy wife traveled south to nurse his recovery. Two weeks later she was dead of the same disease at the age of 29 years. Her husband was too ill to attend her funeral in Grinnell. The remnants of the company, just 23 in number, returned home in late September 1898. Yet another strange irony was the fact that eight of the city's firemen were members of Company K (*Herald*, January 7, April 8, 26, September 6, 23, 1898).

Before Company K was mobilized, Americans were mobilized to strike it rich in the Alaskan Klondike. Seven cars of "Klondike Pilgrims," fully 150 Missourians, passed through town on the Central line in early March. The notable Miss Jane Adams, founder of Hull House in Chicago, was present in Grinnell for a series of five lectures during January and February, and some or all of the presentations took place in the Congregational Church (*Herald*, January 11, February 25, March 1, 4, 1898).

The *Herald* opined that "half a section in Hades was preferable to whole counties in Texas" and that was certainly the experience of the Spaulding Company in their marketing their vehicles in the Lone Star State. It was the marketing savy of the firm that made it a success, but Texas proved itself to be just a little hard traveling. First the legislature required the "foreign" dealers had to pay a $250 state tax and a $150 per-county tax to do business. Local competitors could pay a $3.00 county tax. Spaulding took the issue to Federal court and prevailed in June 1898. The competition in three counties formed what was called a "Hardware Association" and its armed representatives shadowed the Spaulding salesmen everywhere they went. Spaulding secured an injucntion against this operation in mid-August (*Herald*, September 12, 1898).

The 1898 school census enumerated 1,065 prospective students (505 males and 560 females) of which 76 percent were actually enrolled. The Kindergarten had 81 enrollees, the high school 183. Thus 17 percent of all prospective students were high schoolers, and these accounted for 22 percent of all school students. The *Herald r*eported all of the school buildings were crowded, a sharp rebuke for those who two years previously had opposed building a 2nd Ward school building. The Parker School had cost $10,000 and the editors argued "it ought to have cost more and been a better building (*Herald*, February 11, September 20, 23, 1898).

> The mud blockade has been effective since Sunday, and it has needed neither Hobson, the *Merimac*, nor a cork for the bottle to make it perfect (*Herald*, October 21, 1898).[10]

Iowa College celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1898, calling it a "semi-centennial" a phrase that would be re-used in later observances. The college boasted 700 graduates, 94 percent of whom were still living.[11] A most ambitious goal, perhaps the inception of the famous Grinnell College endowment, was that of raising $350,000, $150,000 for new or expanded buildings and $200,000 for an endowment (Des Moines *Daily News*, January 7, 1898).

The 1899 building total did rebound, to $149,065, of which $128,875 went into new construction, $53,450 being expended on 32 new residences (an average of $1,670). House improvements numbered just 16 with a total cost of $13,550 (average cost of $846). Another mark of a "metropolitan" community was its ability and willingness to award

[10] Hobson was Richmond Hobson, the Assistant Navy Constructor who was responsible for the failed effort to sink the U. S. Navy Collier *Merrimac* in Santiago Harbor in 1898 to contain the Spanish Fleet. The cork was Major General Benjamin Butler's failed effort to capture Richmond by his seizure of Bermuda Hundred during the Civil War, he instead penned in his army and President Lincoln observed "Butler is in a bottle, strongly corked."

[11] Among the graduates were four architects, 7 surveyors, 8 civil engineers; 51 attorneys, 20 consuls, 27 journalists, 53 ministers and 23 missionaries, 20 physicians and 336 educators (Des Moines *Daily News*, January 7m, 1898).

major and prominent construction contracts to out-of-town builders. Thus the new opera house was to be consigned (*Herald*, December 29, 1899; Des Moines *Daily Iowa Capital*, July 29, 1899).

If there was a focused development that year it took place in Bagg's Addition as noted by the Herald, where there were six new houses underway as of mid-May:

> Considerabl property in lots and acre sections has been sold recently in the Bagg's addition. Among the purchasers who will build either this season or later are W. G. Knapp, Con See, Mr. McDonald, J. W. Gilbert and Mr. Smith (*Herald*, May 5, 16, 1899).

The siting of Grinnell relative to railroads was timely and good judgement, but it was apparently also a good location for tornados. A tornado missed the city on July 30 by a mile, passing to the north. Severe windstorms struck in early June, knocking down chimneys and breaking "a great many trees." The Ladies Cemetery Association replaced the rotting wooden plat markers with 650 numbered metal markers and 800 star markers, costing $159.15. The new Norwegian Lutheran Church was dedicated on November 12. The fairgrounds suffered a massive grass fire that consumed all of the hog sheds, and the cattle and horse sheds in early November. Increased electrical usage forced the electric light plant to add a new 150-horsepower engine and a new 2,000-light dynamo. The *Herald* observed that "This means an extension of the use of electric lights in our city." The corner of Washington and West streets gained an electric light. The Spaulding plant was so busy that it was operating with 11.5 hour long shifts. The new Spaulding Block, built that summer, contained the first opera house on its upper floor. Even more significantly, the same building housed the first real post office for Grinnell. Previous post offices had leased this and that location but this facility was built for and was pre-approved by the U.S. Post Office. Postal receipts were a measure of community growth and the 1897 receipts had totalled just $10,000. The 1898 receipts increased to $12,500, justifying a higher-class postal service. C. L. Robberts was postmaster and his facility received all new equipment and Spaulding sweetened the deal by providing water closets in the basement at no expense (*Herald*, May 23, June 6, July 4, 11, August 1, 8, October 10, October 31, November 3, 6, 10, December 8, 1899).

One 1899 downtown improvement, the construction of the 72-room Hotel Monroe, was later credited with making Grinnell a successful convention city. It was Grinnell's first truly modern hotel accomodation (*Herald*, December 16, 1904).

The *Herald* editors were so despairing for pavement of any sort that they celebrated C. W. H. Beyer's 500 feet long sidewalk, laid at the east end of East Third Avenue. The new walk would "enable some of the suburban residents to come to town next winter without getting their feet muddy" noted the editors (*Herald*, September 22, 1899).

The annual school census, taken for the coming fall term enumerated seven fewer students (those aged 8-21 years) than found the previous year. The total of 1,058 eligible students included 497 males and 561 females, with 22 prospectives residing outside of the limits. A second grade school, named Cooper School, was begun in mid-June on the corner of East Street and 5th Avenue. The *Herald* observed "with Parker School in the northwest and Cooper School in the northeast-both beautiful up-to-date buildings-Grinnell can begin to take some pride in her school buildings." Cooper School was a six-classroom design, said to be a Colonial design, but without a tower. There was a strong movement in favor of building two new four-room schools but the single facility was finally decided upon (*Herald*, May 2, 23, June 13, July 4, 28, September 19, 1899).

Building in 1899 was hindered by two factors, a wet spring and the advance of materials costs. The new men's gymnasium for Iowa College, planned the previous fall, had its contracts increased by $3,000 "on account of the advance in its prices of materials." As late as mid-May building was hindered but not halted by rainy weather (*Herald*, March 3, 1899).

The year 1900 was disappinting in terms of total improvement costs, that being $69,050. The *Herald* again offered that with no major new business blocks or large public improvements and for the first time, it was explained that the improvements list was incomplete, and focused on new buildings and only "commodious" additions. Still, "the list… is a very creditable one and shows that Grinnell people continue to build beautiful homes such as have given our town an

enviable reputation among our sister cities." The 24 new residences comprised the bulk of what was built. Their total valuation was $50,600 with an average cost of $2,108. Despite the claim made by the Herald, house improvements tallied a respectable 35, for a total cost of $15,975 and an average cost of just $456. This was also the year of the new barn, with six being built for a total cost of $2,200 (*Herald*, January 1, 1901).

The city did gain an ice house (T. B. Pump on the Corrough Lot), the final payment on the 1894 sewer was paid, and the Hedrick mile track was demolished due to local opposition. Ever conscious of nearby Newton, the 500-person population gain since 1890 was particularly celebrated because "Saint's Rest" (aka Grinnell) had continued to best that county seat's population, 3,860 to 3,682. No surprise, Grinnell won in the school age headcount as well, 1,095 (488 males, 607 females) to 1,078. All this local growth argued for a new city directory and S. H. Crosby orchestrated its canvassing, the headcount being completed the first week of July. The *Herald* urged those missed to submit their names (*Herald*, January 16, May 22, July 10, September 25 November 20, December 18, 1900).

The long-delayed (since 1894) Men's Gymnasium for the college had been jump-started in 1898 and $15,000 was raised to start the building. Rapid price increases in building materials didn't help. Laros and Sons also started work on a new three-story brick factory building and the Herald observed that Grinnell was "growing with [the] Republican prosperity" also termed the "McKinley prosperity." The gym, costing $20,000 to erect and equip, was dedicated on January 12, 1900. The Waterloo *Reporter* offered that it would "offer methods of athletic work which the students have heretofore unknown, and it is hoped will increase the general good health of the student body" (*Herald*, January 12, August 14, 21, September 11, October 13, 23, 26, 1890; *Semi-Weekly Iowa State Reporter* [Waterloo, Iowa], January 16, 1900).

A FINE TRADING POINT

> Few towns have equalled Grinnell in its rapid growth as a point where large lines of goods are carried by enterprising merchants and sold at a very low margin of profit. A few years ago stores were small and stocks of goods correspondingly small. To-day Grinnell has stores that equal in size and convenience those in larger cities. Grinnell's enterprising business men have placed the town in the front rank as a trading point, and the large number of people who come here from such towns as Oskaloosa, Newton and other neighboring points attest the growth in our business and the low margins on goods sold.
>
> No better town to live in anywhere than Grinnell. No more enterprising or liberal business men anywhere than here. The stranger who visits our large stores and buys once also comes again….There are about 30 houses in the city thus striving to bring business to this town. Some by mail, some by newspaper advertising…(*Herald*, December 13, 1900).

The total numbers again swelledtp $200,000 during 1901 due to the building of the Stewart Public Library ($15,000), the Colonial Theater/Opera House ($25,000), two business blocks (I.O.O.F. and Longshore, $11,000), expenditures by the Spaulding Manufacturing Company ($14,000), and the Interior Telephone Company ($17,000). Total non-residential improvements were $104,425. On the residential side of the ledger, there were 25 new homes with a total building cost of $73,550 and an average cost of $2,942. Nine of the new houses were specifically cited for their noteworthy appearance. House improvements numered 26, with a total expenditure of $16,150 and an average cost of $621. There were four new barns, costing $1,100. The *Herald* took an uncharacteristically long look back:

> The year just closing has been one of the most successful in every respect that Grinnell has seen. The improvements in the residence and business houses of the city easily foot up to $200,000, a sum unusually large for a town of 4,000 people. Since 1889 Grinnell has taken no backward step in the matter of material growth. Scarcely a year has passed in which the improvements have not reached $100,000, making easily in the past eleven years nearly or quite a total of one and a quarter millions of dollars. And in what way are the improvements visible? In some of the most substantial brick and stone business houses to be found in the state of Iowa. In what is probably the most attractive business center of any city in Iowa of 4,000 people. In over 100 beautiful residences, making the attractive homes in the city surpass in number those of any town in Iowa of its size. In two new beautiful stone and brick churches and one smaller. In a system of waterworks. In a fine sewer system. In two new school houses. In two

> gymnasium buildings at the college. In two new manufacturing plants. And so we go on naming for a column long the improvements that have helped make the town a beautiful and attractive city to live in… We like Grinnell because of its beautiful houses, and its liberal minded and intelligent people. Grinnell is always taking a step forward, but it has by no means reached the end of its course. There is still much to do. If we would keep astride with our progressive neighbors, the problem of paving must be solved soon. There is but one way to pave and that is to pave. To pave at once and do it well. There ought to be no delay about it. The sewer is practically paid for. Rents in Grinnell are high and the property can well affort to lay several blocks of paving at once. Then there is the matter of soft water supply. To make our town valuable as a manufacturing center an abundance of soft water must be provided….(*Herald*, December 24, 1901).

Growth was sufficiently heady mid-year that the *Herald* published a list on new houses and it accurately predicted additional house building, noting:

> The prospect for a continuation of the building boom until the fall is exceedlingly good. Notwithstanding the high price of material, the good times have made it possible for many to build and work goes steadily on. The work brought here by the construction of the new telephone exchange is no small item. Add to this the large amount of building in progress and our merchants are tolerably busy" (*Herald*, August 2, 1901).

There were a number of minor improvements. Fourth Avenue east of the Central tracks was filled and improved and the park received a new bandstand. The city dump east of town, a 25-acre tract, was fenced and cleaned up. The mayor also caught some local flack for draining and cleaning up Lake Como, a man-made lake located in southeast Grinnell and built by Craver, Steele and Austin as a boiler water source. Spaulding Company had inherited it and used it for 11 years. Spaulding added a tile drain, and deepened it but critics charged that it was subject to sewage contamination. Public health became a major local issue and a temporary emergency hospital was established east of the cemetery. Dr. P. E. Somers established a successful private hospital that summer but numerous cases of quarantined cases in individual houses, due to smallpox, typhoid or diptheria, were reported (*Herald*, February 5, 19, June 25, July 19, 23, September 6, November 22, 1901; Semi-Weekly Cedar Falls *Gazette*, April 23, 1901).

The city's assessed value increased $310,568 in two years, between 1899 $2,663,836 total, $665,959 taxable) and 1901 ($2,974,404, $743,601 taxable). The frequently increased Spaulding Company facilities and "six sets of salesmen" were inadequate to meet orders so another major addition was begun. The armory gained a major addition as well and the telephone company told residents that a home telephone would cost but three and a half cents each day (*Herald*, January 22, March 12, May 31, September 13, 1901).

Two of the more notable city residences were cited. L. F. Mason did a house trade with S. S. Preston, in West Grinnell and was said to have "one of the finest dwellings in the city," one that came with five vacant lots for yard. The John Goodfellow residence also in West Grinnell, on Block 19, came up for sale in July. Built at a reported cost of $17,000, it was described as the "largest and most magnificent residences in the city" with "the largest and most beautiful grounds" as well. L. G. Pierce got for a house trade and $1,000 (*Herald*, July 9, 19, October 11, 1901).

Telephone service in Grinnell had flat-lined "at a trifle over a hundred phones" by mid-1901 because the Iowa Telephone Company couldn't make any profit on local telephones and calls. Patented Bell Telephones had to be used and the excessive rent that the company paid Bell for the machines made adding any more local service a losing proposition. The only company revenue came from long-distance calls and presumably the company already was serving the clients most likely to make those calls. A local telephone company, the Interior Telephone Company, was advocated and was at work raising up new poles by the fall of 1901. The Herald watched the poles go up and noted "it takes a veritable deep well to build thema nd an army of men with long poles to raise them to their places" (*Herald*, May 3, September 17, 1901).

During 1902 $231,220 in improvements were tallied, with the "real figure" estimated to be $250,000 in light of the lack of time and opportunity to identify and accurately cost out every building project. The *Herald* led its annual

report by acknowledging "The number of large, beautiful residences built in the city this year [which]…indicates that the prosperity of our people has out run the advance in the cost of material. Additional comfort has been sought in spite of the fact that it has cost more to build than usual." Utilities, public (water) and private (electricity) expended $58,000. The need for a soft water supply was finally being addressed and an $8,000 sewage disposal plant and a $14,000 deep water well comprised the major investments. There were 30 new houses (and seven associated barns) that were erected for a total of $78,030 (average cost $2,601). Just 18 additions were recorded, totalling $22,370 (average cost $1,242). Thirteen other barns were built for a total cost of $4,700 (average cost $361). The most expensive new house cost $10,030, the most expensive remodelling $4,000 (there were two of these and two that cost $3,500), and the most expensive barn was $1,500 (*Herald*, January 2, 1903).

The city's first resident automobile arrived. Typically it was owned by Dr. P. E. Somers. The *Herald* reported that the Oldsmobile was "the first automobile that has attached itself to the town and will be viewed with suspicion for awhile by all the equine race." E. W. Marsh ordered his electric "National" from Indianapolis and built the first barn designed specifically to house the vehicle (*Herald*, May 16, July 1, 1902).

The major land deal of 1902 was the sale of lots 1 and 6, Block 40, Hadley's Addition, which allowed for the northward extension of Elm and East streets to 10th Avenue. Outside interests from Tipton, Iowa, bought 52 lots in Hadley's Addition and obtained an option on 25 undeveloped acres south of 10th Avenue. All of the 52 lots were auctioned off on June 10, for $125-$325. No immediate house-building frenzy appears to have followed the sale however. In South Grinnell, Lyman Longley purchased six undeveloped acres along Harrison Street in early July. In the southwest part of the city, County Surveyor Buck caused some disruption by correcting a number of lot lines by five to ten feet (*Herald*, March 18, April 23, May 30, June 3, 13, July 4, 1902).

The Stewart Library dedication, held in mid-May 1902 is noteworthy because the city substituted its own local benefactors, Mr. and Mrs. Joel Stewart to the usual Andrew Carnegie grant. The accomplishment capped a 15-year local drive that had been largely pushed by the Priscillas womens' group. Perhaps freed from providing a public library, Carnegie provided a very generous $50,000 library grant to Iowa College the next spring. The grant was conditioned on the free use of the college library by the community and the local provision of $5,000 annually to maintain and develop the new library. Another women's organization that long contributed to special projects was the Public Improvement Association. Organized in 1900, this group furnished the boxes in the new opera house. Then, their funds depleted, they set back to replentish their treasury (*Sioux County Bee* [Rock Rapids, Iowa], April 10, 1903; *Herald*, April 25, 1902; *Daily Courier* [Waterloo, Iowa], June 4, 1909).

The year 1902 was a propitious one for improvements. Some changes required no public expense, such as an ordinance that prohibited the posting of any notices on any vertical surface, including hitching posts, or even on sidewalks. Another new Council ordinance prohibited the placement of trash or ashes in the streets. A year later,W. G. T. Swift was the go-to man if one desired fliers or bills distributed. Mayor H. W. Spaulding made a serious effort to trim the trees along the principal streets and the *Herald* welcomed the improvement, noting "the outlook on the world beyond the bounds of the rows of trees on either side of the wagon road [is] the more inviting." The *Herald's* editors were teased by the paving of a bit of alley behind the Rapson and Moyle store. They observed "we have expressed the hope that we would live to see pavement begun in Grinnell" (*Herald*, March 7, 28, May 23, July 29, 1902, March 31, 1903).

> There is a constantly growing demand for paved streets, permanent sidewalks, city ownership of lighting plant and soft water system and it will not be long till such questions as these will determine who will be the successful consideration for councilman and mayor.
>
> These questions may not come up this year or next but sooner or later they are bound to come up and become the burning question of the times. Perhaps the need of a large high school building is greater than any other question of the city to-day and may keep all other questions of the city governemet in the back ground for the present (*Herald*, February 17, 1903).

The accomplishment of any improvement that required any great expense, was beyond the capacity of the city government because "the city has been too deeply in debt for other improvements." The historic push for a soft water source was finally accomplished by a stock company, with the assumption that the city would later assume its

management. At a cost of $15,000 Arbor Lake was created in the southwest part of city by damming a slough. A standpipe and pump were put in place to transfer this fresh surface water source to the waterworks and the city's industries finally had a water source for their boilers. The following spring, the lake was "parked" by a volunteer group, planting trees and otherwise landscaping its surrounds. The Grinnell Gun Club evolved into a 1,000-member "Outing Club" and a two-story clubhouse with verandahs and a boat house were built and by July 4, 1903, the lake was a recreational success. The waterworks installed the first sewage treatment equipment, a septic tank system that cost $7,239 (*Herald*, May 23, 1902; April 10, June 20, July 7, 29, August 4, 8, 1903).[12]

The electric company added a centralized heating plant and the downtown streets were dug up to run the heating pipes to the subscribers. G. M. Christian was at least one homeowner who signed on for the heat, and the Baptist Church did the same. As was the case with all of this type of venture the service was fitful and users overwhelmed the steam supply. An additional boiler was ordered from Marshalltown in late November. On the electrical side of the ledger, the last Iowa College building, Blair Hall, was finally wired and its oil lamps removed. Forty new and improved street lights were installed (*Herald*, July 18, August 26, September 26, 30, November 25, 1902).

The true local communications revolution was in telephone service. The Interior Telephone Company was incorporated in mid-February 1902 and two of its officers immediately organized the Long Distance Copper Telephone Company that would link the city with the world. The Jasper County Telephone Company was even then approaching Grinnell with its copper phone lines and the new entity promised similar links to Marshalltown, Oskaloosa, Marengo and Iowa City. Work on these extensions began in April and were well advanced by July, by which time a line was fast approaching Des Moines as well. By late May the Interior Telephone Company boasted 350 city and 400 rural phone subscribers. G. L. Mile's hardware store had phone number "1", A. D. Talbot's drugstore had "2" and R. G. Coutts, the masonry contractor was "3." In addition to phones, the rural hinterland gained the first free rural mail routes, five in number, beginning July 1 (*Herald*, February 14, 28, May 20, June 27, 1902)

The biggest tease perhaps, was the hope for interurban links to other communities. Des Moines completed an elecric railway to Colfax and there was talk of an extension to Newton. The Toledo Electric Railroad hired the Iowa Engineering Company to survey a right-of-way between Waterloo and Grinnell and the arrival of the ten-man survey team in the city in mid-1902 was cause for some optimism. A year later, the company informed the Council that the railroad would become a reality if the city donated a street useage franchise, provided free soft water, provided a depot and switching grounds, deferred taxes and donated a lot of money (*Herald*, July 2, 1902; July 10 1903).

Grinnell the progressive city was in fact a very conservative enclave. There were no labor unions and the *Herald*, a firm Republican organ, poked fun at the efforts of the downtown store clerks to secure a 7:30 p.m. closing time each evening. It observed "Grinnell is about to assume metropolitan airs, a labor union is probable and a boycott is among the possibilities." Another indication that Grinnell was not so very much different from her Iowa-cousin communities was this observation, offered mid-year:

> Houses must be scarce in Grinnell. Mr. E. S. Clark, the colored barber under the Merchant's National Bank, has moved to Mason City because he was unable to rent a house here.

Along similar veins, contractor John Spencer's builders staged a walkout, refusing to work with Black workers. The latter, imported from Oskaloosa, were accordingly put to work by themselves, laying cementoid sidewalks (*Herald*, May 5, July 4, 18, 1902).

Iowa College entered into a "new era of progress" under its new leader, President Dan F. Bradley. The school celebrated its 55th anniversary and increasingly, the city was gaining new residents who relocated for the express purpose of educating their children there. M. E. Sturgeon of Ewarts rented 1110 Broad Street in the fall of 1903 to that end, as did D. A. Hopkins, a traveling salesman from Chicago, who rented 1228 Main for the 1901 fall term. Mrs. C. W. Taylor of Dunlap already had a daughter attending the college when she purchased W. C. Rayburn's house on North Broad Street in mid-1901. The home industry of privately housing students appears to have increased at this point in time as well, as the

[12] The public interest in Arbor Lake as a recreational asset ended with a double drowning (H. C. and Clark Spencer) and by 1934 the water level was greatly reduced and there was talk about once again developing it as a public park (*Herald*, October 2, 1934).

college expanded its student body. Levi Frazier purchased a West Street house and expected "to have some rooms ready to rent to college students." Thomas Gauley moved to the city from Brooklyn and purchased a residence on the corner of 6th Avenue and Elm Street, "intending to take up his residence there…and [to] fit it up for keeping roomers in connection with the college, for which it is admirably adapted" (*Herald*, July 16, August 2, 1901; May 9, June 10, 13, August 22, 1902; September 4, 1903).

Another measure of metropolitaness was the contested presence of bowling alleys and billiard halls in Grinnell. The bowling alley controversy began in mid-March 1902 when D. W. Norris asked why Council approval was being required for starting a bowling alley? Mayor Spaulding seems to have started the bowling matter when he installed a company lane. At any rate by late November the Marshalltown and Des Moines bowling teams were the first to square off in Grinnell's new bowling alley on Main Street (H. B Preston, who was said to be a promoter took pains to publicly disassociate himself in a letter to the editor), Marshalltown won. The *Herald* took some pride that "Montezuma has gone Grinnell one better" with its combination bowling alley AND billiard hall. By the following spring, Grinnell had SEVERAL billiard halls as well (*Herald*, March 18, August 15, October 10, November 21, December 30, 1902).

> Unusual sights have attracted the people of Grinnell this week. A dwelling house has been moved from the south part of town up Main street and west on Fifth avenue, the family occupying it and its household goods unmoved. We have had greater annoyance many a house-cleaning day than this family had in moving house, bag and baggage to the farther end of town. But the sight that attracted still more attention was the dog riding a bicycle. When the master was ready to ride his wheel the dog would climb to his master's back and enjoy his high perch while the rider wheeled him about town (*Herald*, May 8, 1903).

A very important 1902 accomplishment was breaking ground for the Uncle Sam Club, a Hull House like institution that would serve Grinnell for several generations, its motto being "mutual helpfulness and preparation for good citizenship." Founded in 1901, it was strictly a boy's club and was located at Bethel Cottage on the south end of Pierce Street. Des Moines architect Eugene Taylor donated his services to design the brick building and it was built in 1902 at a cost of $3,200, an expense that was augmented by the donation of the brick by George Sampson and considerable volunteer labor. The building was located at 1st Avenue and Pearl Street in southwest Grinnell (*Herald*, February 1, March 25, July 8, August 12, 1902; January 30, 1903).

As 1903 closed, the editor of the *Herald* penned yet another retrospective on the progress of Grinnell:

> For a number of years Grinnell has shown a strong, healthy growth. There has been no boom period nor yet has there been a period of stagnation. Building has kept pace with the business done. As more business blocks have been demanded new ones have been built. Rarely has Grinnell had vacant store buildings for any considerable time.
>
> The residence portion of the city is fully up to the business portion in keeping up with the times. We have more beautiful residences, more perhaps than any city in the state of equal size, and most of our residences are large enough for comfort and are imposing structures.
>
> The lack of any boom period has done a great deal for Grinnell. It has kept the building craze away and prevented hastily and illy constructed buildings from growin up in the night here and there to give the town the appearance of the map of Oceania. It has given real estate in the city a steady value. It has always been safe to buy a building thereon as neither the lot nor the building would greatly depreciate in value. However in common with all land values within the state the values of residence lots within the city have just about doubled in value within the last five years. This fact has stimulated the purchase of residence further out from the business center of the town. More houses have been built in the outskirts of the city this year than ever before in comparison with those built nearer the business center. In northeast Grinnell alone, a dozen houses have been built this year in what, one might almost say was a cow pasture last year.
>
> Grinnell's growth for the past few years has been of a kind that is very gratifying to our pride and commendable to those who had a part in the growth. A club house sprang up in southwest Grinnell where a wholesome patriotic work is being done. An opera house sprang into being which at once an object of

> beauty and a source of pleasure to our people. A large imposing high school is in the process of construction. A soft water supply has been provided that the factories we have and those we may expect to secure may have an abundance of water suited for boilers. Incidentally a lake has resulted which in summer is a boating resort and in winter is an ice field for gliding skaters.

Total improvement expenditures during 1903 were $128,000, a figure well below that of the previous year. While 36 houses were built, 11 of these cost less than $1,000, and 15 less than $1,500. Seven new houses cost more than $3,300. The total new house construction cost was $69,855 (an average cost of just $1,940). Either house additions were no longer an item of interest or they weren't occuring. Just six improvements, costing just $6,800, were recorded. The new barn count was way down as well, with just two being built. Just two non-residential building efforts were credited to the year. The new high school, to cost $50,000, had expended $20,000 and a new foundary, Koch Manufacturing Company, had built shops valued at $12,000. The year was a wet one and Mississippi River Valley flooding shut down the supply of building lumber, delaying the new Herald building for two full months (*Herald*, July 17, 1903; December 18, 1903).[13]

Nearby Newton, the county seat of Jasper County, was frequently made a point of comparison, particularly when it came to public improvements such as paving. Unlike the completely unpaved Grinnell, Newton was using an incremental approach and the *Heralds* editors noted, in mid-1903, "Street by street Newton escapes the mire." Newton had an enviable system of corner "garbage boxes" that kept its streets free of filth. The editors called for these and then dared to dream of house-by-house garbage collection, suggesting: "At the same time boxes might be left at every house and a city scavenger appointed to gather up the scraps which are thrown out from every kitchen, the disposal of which is the trial of every housewife's existence" (*Herald*, July 29, 1902; June 26, 1903).

The school system was overwhelmed by a growing student body. The relative high participation of eligible youths in school likely represented the influence of the college and the many who were drawn to Grinnell because of it. Still, the school district had faced strong conservative opposition when it added new buildings, and the facilities it gained were noteworthy for their miserly size. As of January 1903 40 high school pupils were studying at home and attending "school" only for recitations, and by the fall term the Uncle Sam Club basement was housing the Kindergarten.[14] The issue of a new high school, while not as long-enduring as the paving issue, was being hotly debated. Options including moving the existing high school, and building or adding on to the resulting rearrangement. The school district, like the city, was in debt for what had been built, to the tune of $15,000 but Iowa law allowed for $40,000 in bonded debt. Accordingly $25,000 in new bonds, could leverage a $60,000 new high school. (*Herald*, January 30, 1903).

The seeds for the development of the northeast portion of the city had been planted the previous several years, and the crop, in terms of new houses, was finally harvested in 1903. The *Herald* tallied the harvest:

> Twelve new houses and six new barns have been built this summer north of Fourth Avenue and east of Elm street and work has begun on the thirteenth house. Not so bad for northeast Grinnell is it? (*Herald*, November 13, 1903).

Grinnell College planned "a semi-centennial" for 1904 but the planned celebration quickly and naturally broadened in its scope. They were "enlarged to include…the town of Grinell, also. The two are so interwoven-the prosperity of the town with the growth of the college, that it has been deemed fitting to give the town a conspicuous place in the programme of the college" (*Rake Register* [Rake, Iowa], May 20, 1904).

The *Herald's* editor, looking back at the close of 1904 with a total expenditure in new improvements of $444,000,, termed the decade just past as "A Decade of Improvement." He recounted the public water system, built in 1893 and the sanitary sewer system started in 1894, and stated that these improvements "placed Grinnell in line for future

[13] In later years Grinnell would become a white-painted house community, but the *Herald* took particular notice when R. C. Pippin, domiciled at the corner of 5th Avenue and Main Street, chose red as a house color in August 1902 (*Herald*, August 29, 1902). The first week of September was a traditional moving time and the Herald recorded 16 families as being on wheels, three departing the city (*Herald*, September 4, 1903).

[14] An excellent refleciton of the times, there had been no provision for water, sewer or bathrooms for the club function, and these were added only when the basement was leased for kindergarten use (*Herald*, September 1, 1903).

developments in the right way, the permanent improvements having been undertaken in the right order." The safe water system in particular eliminated the use of surface wells that "became more and more the breeding grounds of disease germs." Other "perhaps more urgent needs" had delayed the next needed improvement, paving. The disastrous downtown fire of 1889, requiring the expenditure of $200,000 in rebuilding, was also considered a key piece of the decade. Another fire, in 1896, that threatened the Northwest School was credited with changing "the system of architecture in school buildings." The new fireproof Parker School was the direct result. A substantial school population by 1899 brought about the building of Cooper School. The new $60,000 high school followed, as did the Colonial Theater (1901), the public library (1902), and the soft-water supply (and Arbor Lake) (1902). The last-named development made the Grinnell Manufacturing Company possible. The Grinnell College Carnegie Library was built in 1904. It was claimed that "the year just closing has witnessed the greatest improvement by the city in any one year in our history" but the confidence in that claim was undermined by the annotation that "some other years have made a better showing…" (*Herald*, December 16, 1904).

The list of improvements for the year was short because the country was once again in recession. In early August R. H. Haines defended the solvency of the First National Bank after the newspapers in Des Moines and Marshalltown had questioned its future. Haines linked the bank with the larger commercial community, stating:

> The manager of Bradstreets for Iowa often told me that the businessmen of Grinnell have a distinct commercial advantage in rating because of the fact that they are Grinnell businessmen, the town having built up a reputation for solid, conservative, rational business methods.

In less than a week the bank's doors were shut and it wasn't until late December that the first depositor's dividends were paid out. Meanwhile subscribers for a new Citizen's National Bank provided a replacement institution and by December it had opened its doors. This was the city's first bank failure. Another indicator of stressful times was the announcement, made in early April by the Grinnell Fair Association, that no annual fair would be held due to the fair's financial condition (*Herald*, April 5, August 2, 9, September 6,13, October 25, December 9, 1904).

One curious inniative during hard times was a final push to relocate the county seat from Montezuma to Grinnell. While Grinnell was hardly centered within the county, the bulk of the county population and three of its larger communities were distributed across the north end of Poweshiek County. A petition bearing 3,298 signatures, called for a county referendum on the matter. A Montezuma defense was that the construction of a new courthouse would cost $300,000. The Herald paried with a cut of the new Johnson County courthouse (Iowa City), that had cost $120,000 and one of the Iowa County building, that cost just $70,000 (*Herald*, April 1, 19, 1904).

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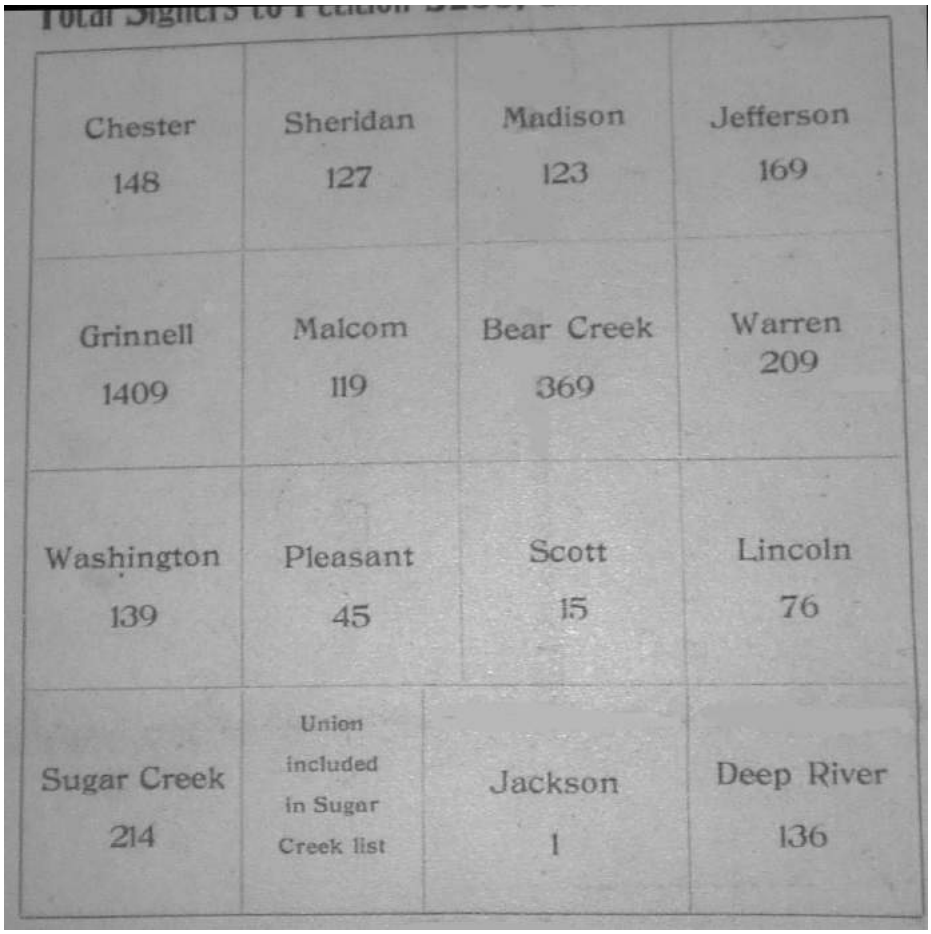


Chester 148	Sheridan 127	Madison 123	Jefferson 169
Grinnell 1409	Malcom 119	Bear Creek 369	Warren 209
Washington 139	Pleasant 45	Scott 15	Lincoln 76
Sugar Creek 214	Union included in Sugar Creek list	Jackson 1	Deep River 136

Township distribution of supporters of a new county seat vote, April 1904 (*Herald*, April 8, 1904).

By 1904 Grinnell had two automobile dealers. Jeweler E. A. Marsh was selling the National Electric and was a district agent. E. H. Spaulding offered Cadillacs. When W. F. Hammond received his "Elmore" Grinnell had nine machines, representing seven different makes and eight various types, including one electric car (*Herald*, January 1, March 4, April 19, 1904).

One architecturally notable local improvement was the introduction of concrete block in lieu of limestone for foundations in particular. Any foundation in the city, made of this new material, necessarily dates to 1904 or later. The *Herald* reported that two concrete block ("cement blocks") were established in Grinnell during 1904 "and the buildings this year have made use of these blocks." The initial use, for entire buildings, was for industrial plants, and the new Inman and Laros factories were built using them, as was the Perry store building. The same source predicted "next summer we expect to see a few private residences constructed of cement blocks" (*Herald*, December 16, 1904).

The summers of 1903 and 1904 were unusually cool. In late January 1904 a week of intense cold accompanied by heavy sleet rendered travelling by any means virtually impossible. Even "sharply shod teams" made little headway and area stock suffered greatly. The German Ball offered at the armory suffered for rural attendees due to the sleet. Rural phone lines shut down and the *Herald* advised "The climate is a bit too Klondike to get the country lines in working order." A backward spring followed and as late as May 20, pipes five feet underground at the cemetery were frozen solid shut. Year's end brought with it the largest and hardest blizzard since that of 1887 (*Herald*, January 22, May 20, October 21, December 30, 1904).

The high school enrollment reached 216 students in the fall of 1904 and the Herald preened "Who says Grinnell didn't need a new high school building?" There were 966 pupils in the four elementary schools (Cooper, Parker, South and Spaulding). The new high school was opened for public inspection in late November. A tally of high school

graduates over the past five years yielded a total of 141 students. Sixty-one of these (43 percent) had immediately enrolled in Iowa College. Other colleges accounted for 25 of the graduates. Teaching accounted for 24 more and just 31 had failed to continue their education or to teach. The classes were constantly increasing yearly (*Herald*, September 13, October 28, November 25, 1904).

One way to make the improvements of 1905 (a total value of $160,000) outshine those of 1904 ($222,000) was to subtract the two major buildings (the high school and the Carnegie Library) that had inflated the building total for the earlier year. By so doing, "last year's improvements the balance will be materially less than the amount of improvements of this year." Growth was continous if the exceptional achievements were ignored. Absent street paving, concrete sidewalk paving was all the rage. The concrete revolution, inniated the previous year, was by this time complete:

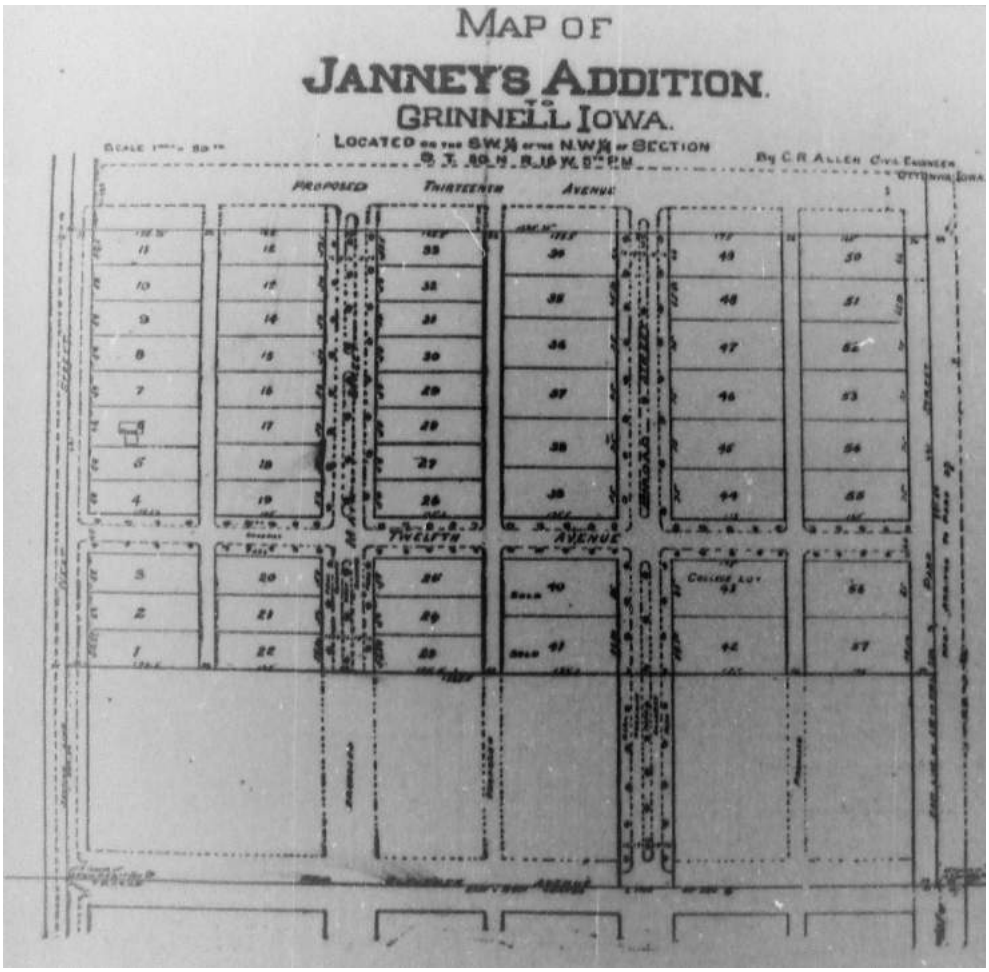
> The noticeable feature in this year's improvements is the use of cement for building purposes, one dwelling and several business buldings having been built and most of the foundations for dwellings. Another noticable feature is that of the great increase in permanent sidewalks, more than five miles of walks having been put in during the summer.

The sidewalks were privately financed and did not represent a municipal improvement. Contractor John Spencer had initiated the art and accounted for 70,000 square feet of the new walks that year. R. G. Coutts was also now in the same line and laid 4,300 square feet (*Herald*, January 2, 1906).

The 1906 improvements, totalling $269,000, was proclaimed the "largest in [the] history of [the] town…without any question." While the annual tally was "as complete as it has been possible for us to prepare" missed improvements would surely increase the total to over $300,000. This was accomplished with only a few major projects, "the great bulk being in comfortable, pleasant dwellings, built by Grinnell's prosperous residencts which are the city's pride." The house building was scattered across the city and was not the product of "any one class of people."

** 1906-18 new houses built at a cost of $78,000.
**a list as complete as it has been possible for us to prepare…and if everything could be gotten it would probably reach $300,000…Most of ith owever is an added value to the town and there is little question that January 1907 sees the town a quarter of a million dollars richer in bettered conditions and new buildings and walks since January 1906.
One striking thing about the improvements this year is that there are only a few very large amounts, the great bulk being in comforable, pleasant dwellings, built by Grinnell's prosperous resident's which are the city's pride. Jan 8, 07

The social scandal of 1906 involved the divorce case of prominent lumber dealer E. B. Brande and his wife E. R. Brande. The two separated in January and Mr. Brande rented other living quarters for his wife and provided her with a $60. monthly living stipend. Heads turned when he walked his wife home when the two met at the same social occasion (*Semi-Weekly Courier* [Waterloo, Iowa], March 20, 1906).



(*Herald*, May 18, 1909)

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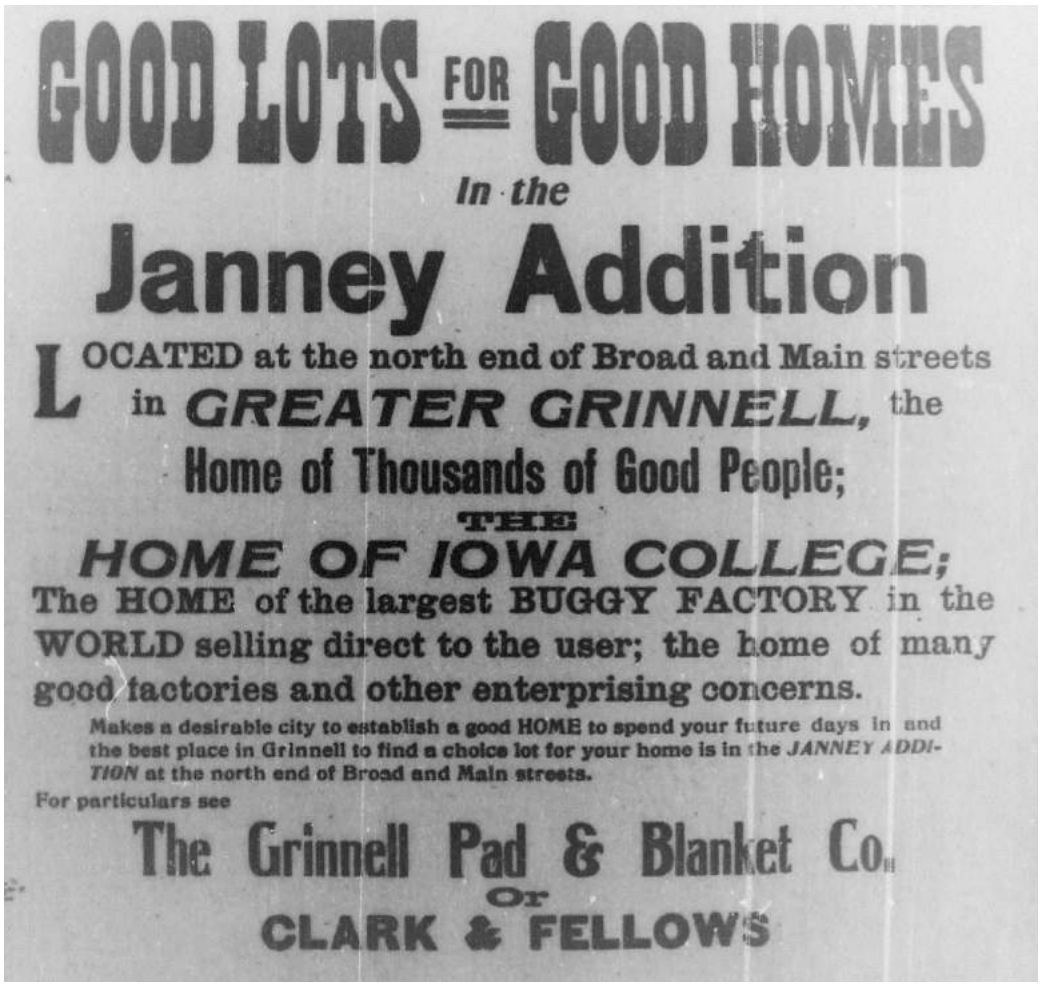

GOOD LOTS FOR GOOD HOMES
In the
Janney Addition
LOCATED at the north end of Broad and Main streets in GREATER GRINNELL, the Home of Thousands of Good People;
THE
HOME OF IOWA COLLEGE;
The HOME of the largest BUGGY FACTORY in the WORLD selling direct to the user; the home of many good factories and other enterprising concerns.
Makes a desirable city to establish a good HOME to spend your future days in and the best place in Grinnell to find a choice lot for your home is in the JANNEY ADDITION at the north end of Broad and Main streets.
For particulars see
The Grinnell Pad & Blanket Co.
Or
CLARK & FELLOWS

(*Herald*, May 18, 1909)

1907 improvements resulted in a record number of new houses. The *Herald* reported "there probably never was a year in which so many fine, substantial houses were erected in Grinnell as in the twelve months just passed." Total building expenditures were $208,300. A total of $113,500 was expended to build 26 new houses. It was noted that in nearby Newton, the county seat of Jasper County, just eight houses had been built at an average cost of $2,000. The average new home in Grinnell that same year cost $4,365. The latter figure was helped considerably by a single house, that of E. H. Spaulding costing $20,000 of course. The least expensive new house cost $1,500 and all of the others cost at least $2,500 each. Thirty-eight houses were improved for a total of just $20,800 (an average of $547). Just seven improvements cost more than $500 but these were sufficiently costly so as to raise the average. On the non-residential side of the improvement ledger, concrete sidewalks cost the most, $15,000, while a new National Guard Armory and the U.P. Church, totalled $20,000 (*Herald*, January 7, 1908).

The total 1908 improvements were $212,500, a figure that had been bettered in 1902, 1904 and 1906, and nearly equalled the previous year. It was pointed out that this accomplishment was made in the face of a $50,000 community commitment to the college endowment fund, the distractions of other improvement movements (establishing a Superior Court, building a Club House, the paving movement, and it being an election year), and hard times ("the hard times of last summer which put a quietus on many business enterprises temporarily"). Once again, much of the expenditure was made for building "a large number of good substantial dwellings" and in improving existing ones. This portion of the improvement expenditures exceeded the 1907 figure. The number of new residences, said to be 25-30, was valued at $125,000. These "were a credit to any city and many of them [were] of more than ordinary attractiveness. Notably, these houses were different from those of previous years:

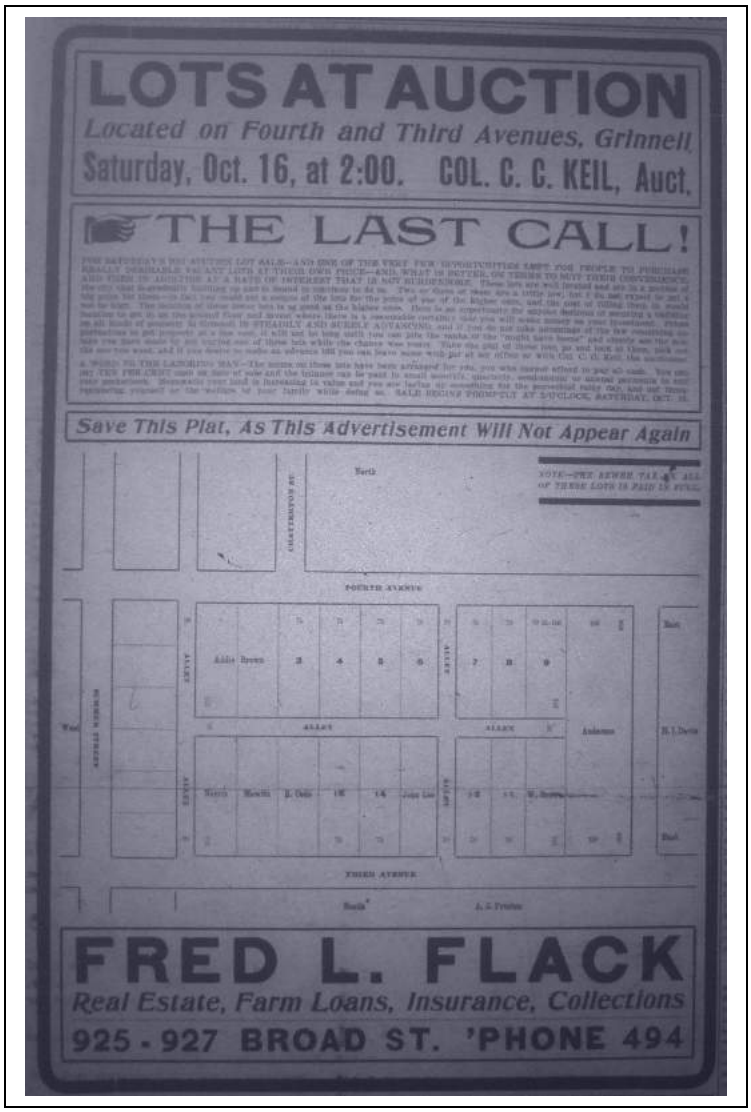
> The tendancy to build houses with some individuality and character in their architectural design, which has developed within recent years, has been more noticeable the past year than ever before. The indications are that Grinnell is past the stage in her development (Heavens be praised!) when a house is a house and so long as it is comfortable within and has one big plate glass bay window, it is past improvement. Grinnell people have discovered that it pays to engage good architects and to build their houses with an eye to external beauty and character as well as for physical comfort within doors. Every house will no longer be like every other house and the danger of getting into a neighbor's house by mistake will be materially lessened for men who come home late at night.

The sidewalk movement continued unabated. Brick sidewalks, ranging in width from four to ten feet, totalled 775 feet. Concrete walks, some as wide as twelve feet, talled 13,681 feet. The annual improvement list included expenditures of $100 or more and residents for the first time were invited to telephone their projects to the *Herald* (*Herald*, January 1, 1909).

The building prospects for the coming year, 1909, promised to be even greater. The city had gained a new industry, the Ottumwa Pad and Blanket factory. The college was expected to build new buildings and the student body was to increase. There was "the opening of the new additon [Merrill's] north of town," and the promise of paving would result in "the anticipated removal of many families to this city" (*Herald*, January 1, 1909).

This was the year of the first street paving. By mid-April the city had been divided into "paving districts," each of which seems to have consisted of one street. A battle of the petitions vied to see which streets would be fully paved and paved first. For whatever reason, the apparent winners on both counts were Park Street (to be paved from Second to Eleventh Avenue), Broad (same range), and West (Fourth to Tenth Avenue), while most of that area's cross-streets would be paved from Park Street to West Street. Long-delayed the intial paving plan included a boulevard for Broad Street, below the railroad and from Fifth to Eighth. The boulevard consisted of a 20 foot-wide parking that was flanked by twin 18 foot wide drives. This feature, beamed the *Herald*, "will do more to make Grinnell a beautiful city than anything undertaken in a long time." Above Eighth Broad Street was to be 24 feet in width, this being the residential standard. Relatively narrow, this width allowed the city to pave more streets and it also allowed for broader publicly-owned parkings. A few street widths deviated from 24 feet. Main was six feet wider south of Fifth. Park had the same addition up to Eigth, while Third and Fifth were both wider, the latter a full 36 feet. Fourth was to have a different width on virtually every block. Residents along Fifth Avenue quickly fired up a petition to narrow their street and anti-Boulevard petitions circulated as well. The Broad Street opponents felt that the 18 foot drive was too narrow to allow passing traffic around hitched vehicles. It was also felt that the central parking would be an unmaintained eyesore. There was also opposition to a vertical curbing because, unline a slanted curb front, buggy wheels were more likely to be wrecked with a straight curb. The 24 foot paving decision was based on state law that limited paving assessments to one-fourth of the property valuation. Many sought a wider pavement on those streets that carried traffice beyond the city. The Council had assumed owner support for the boulevard idea but in the end the headcount was about equal, being slight more supportive in the northern part of the project area. The idea was dropped but the paving began that fall. The final contracts totalled 92,000 yards. The grading work was begun in the latter part of August. One feature, adopted when the curbing was being cast, was to imprint the street names on each corner (*Herald*, April 16, June 16, 25, August 24, September 24, 1909)

Grinnell College improved Ward Field was a $10,000 grandstand and built a $30,000 heating plant. The city paved six miles of road, finally. One of the newly paved streets was Broad Street. A major push was made to boulevard that street north of the downtown and a majority of adjacent property owners were supportive. The council was not and a 30-foot wide paving was approved instead (*Herald*, June 29, July 6, July 13, 1909).


LOTS AT AUCTION
Located on Fourth and Third Avenues, Grinnell
Saturday, Oct. 16, at 2:00. COL. C. C. KEIL, Auct.
THE LAST CALL!
Save This Plat, As This Advertisement Will Not Appear Again
FRED L. FLACK
Real Estate, Farm Loans, Insurance, Collections
925 - 927 BROAD ST. 'PHONE 494

Grinnel expands east
(*Herald*, October 12, 1909)

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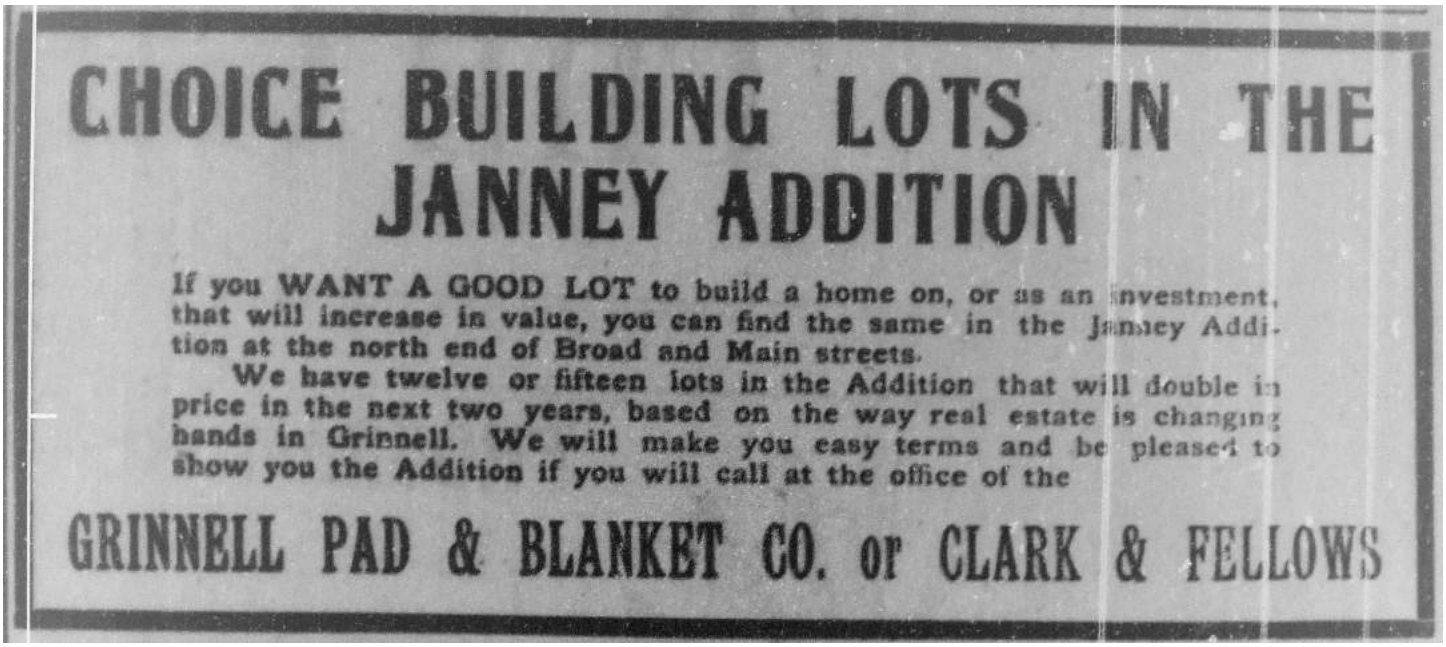
CHOICE BUILDING LOTS IN THE JANNEY ADDITION
If you WANT A GOOD LOT to build a home on, or as an investment, that will increase in value, you can find the same in the Janney Addition at the north end of Broad and Main streets.
We have twelve or fifteen lots in the Addition that will double in price in the next two years, based on the way real estate is changing hands in Grinnell. We will make you easy terms and be pleased to show you the Addition if you will call at the office of the
GRINNELL PAD & BLANKET CO. or CLARK & FELLOWS

Expansion northward, Janney Addition, 1909
(*Herald*, July 6, 1909)

Mid-year in 1909 the *Herald* announced "Grinnell has attained her ambition to pass the 5,500 [population] mark" based upon a gain of 92 students in the school system. Using a standard formula (multiplying the total by 3.6) it was calculated that the city's population had increased 331 over 1908, to 5,565 (*Herald*, July 19, 1909).

The big political event of early 1913 was a non-binding popular vote by women only on the matter of women's suffrage. The issue was thoroughly discussed through January and the vote on February 3 resulted in a 738 yes vote, contrasted with a 75 no vote. A harsh winter storm was credited with keeping half of the voters from the ballot box and it was thought that just half of the eligibles, including female college students, had their views represented (*Herald*, January 7, 21, February 4, 1913).

The school district had accomplished the elimination of its substantial debt in just eight years. Since February 1905, $66,958 in principal, and $3,949 in interest had been paid against the debt. In addition the Petit property adjoining the high school had been purchased for $6,200 for future expansion. The school district buildings were valued at over $200,000 and there was active discussion as to how the broader community could make better use of the buildings after hours (*Herald*, February 14, 1913).

A comprehensive step was taken, with undetermined long-range results, in better coordinating city improvement movements. The Central Committee was organized by three leading activist groups, the Women's Civic League, the Social Service League, and the Congregational Brotherhood. The new committee extended invitations to other similar groups to join them. The invite list consisted of the Commercial Club, the School Board, Grinnell College, The Committee of 15, the WCTU and the Ministerial Union (*Herald*, April 22, 1913).

One important effort, in light of a series of successive contagions in recent years was the appointment of a City Health Physician. Dr. C. E. Harris was holding that position as of early 1913 when he proposed a comprehensive city health campaign that was aimed at eliminating or reducint the outbreaks. Most central to home owners was a recommendation that all buildings that abutted on sewer lines should be forced to make a connection. The extension of the municipal sewer system to the west part of Grinnell was finally assuming tangible prospects. Engineer T. L. Blank was contracted by the city to survey the route for the West Side Sewer in mid-February (*Herald*, February 18, May 6, 1913).

Improvements during 1913 included 11 new houses and 31 enlarged or improved residences. Downtown, the Grinnell Savings Bank was started on 4th Avenue. The Grinnell Washing Machine factroy was enlarged and a concrete

block buildings were constructed for the Laros Buggy Company, along with other commercial enlargements. No effort was made to tally the large number of new garages and barn additions made (*Herald*, August 29, 1913).

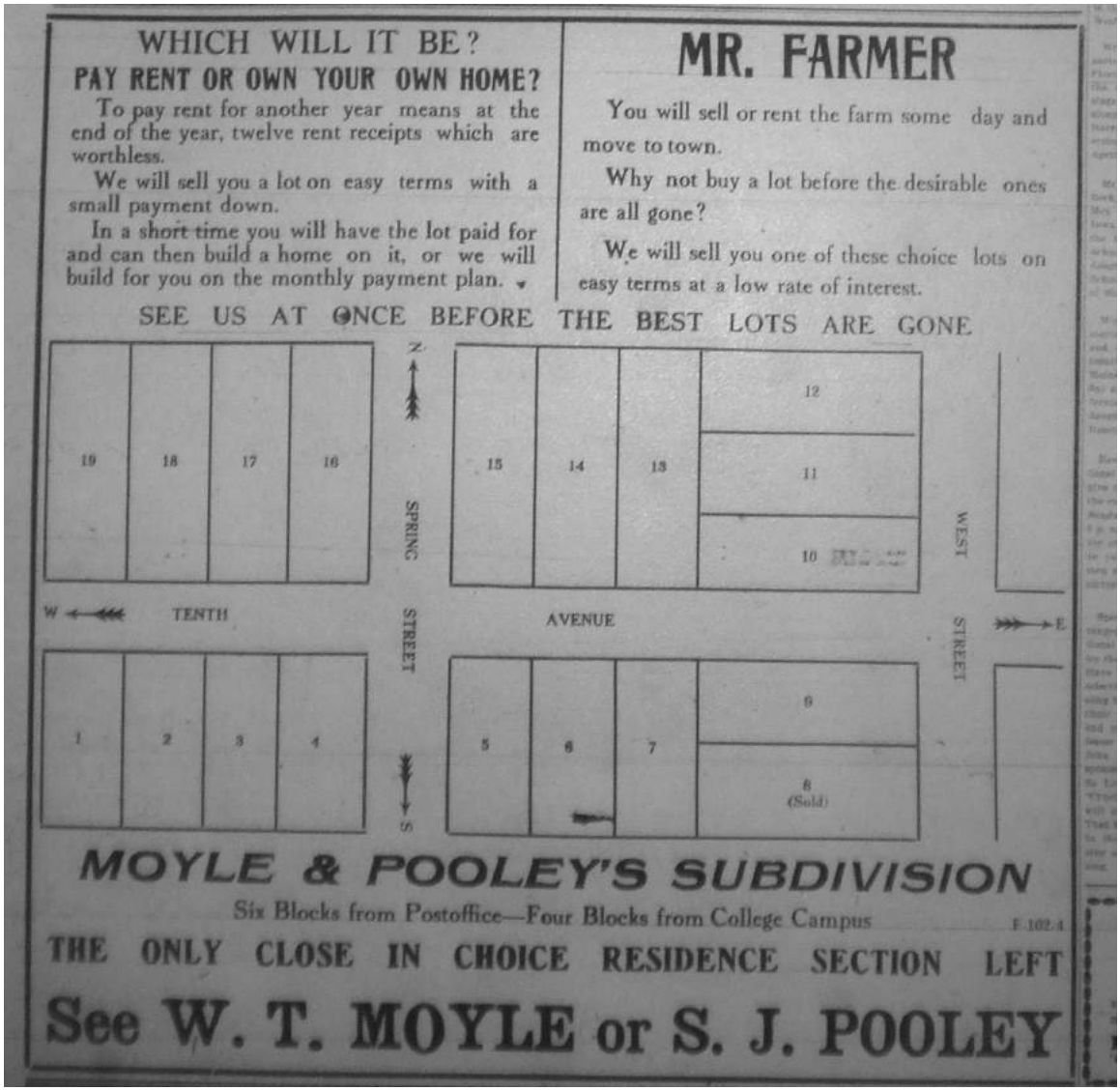
WHICH WILL IT BE?
PAY RENT OR OWN YOUR OWN HOME?
To pay rent for another year means at the end of the year, twelve rent receipts which are worthless.
We will sell you a lot on easy terms with a small payment down.
In a short time you will have the lot paid for and can then build a home on it, or we will build for you on the monthly payment plan.
MR. FARMER
You will sell or rent the farm some day and move to town.
Why not buy a lot before the desirable ones are all gone?
We will sell you one of these choice lots on easy terms at a low rate of interest.
SEE US AT ONCE BEFORE THE BEST LOTS ARE GONE
19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
SPRING STREET
WEST STREET
W
TENTH AVENUE
E
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
9
8
(Sold)
MOYLE & POOLEY'S SUBDIVISION
Six Blocks from Postoffice—Four Blocks from College Campus
THE ONLY CLOSE IN CHOICE RESIDENCE SECTION LEFT
See W. T. MOYLE or S. J. POOLEY

Figure: Moyle & Pooley's Subdivision plat
(*Herald*, March 21, 1913)

There was a substantial anticipation of continued northward residential expansion above Tenth (west of West Street) and Eleventh avenues (east of West Street) and it would appear that pre-war and the coming of the First World War likely prevented newly platted areas from being built up. The area that is in part occupied by Merrill's Park, was replatted several times over. The Janney Addition collapsed with Janney's fortunes. Architect Walter Burley Griffin designed Clark's Addition in 1913 to replace it and what the designer envisioned would have rivaled the Prairie/Craftsman houses of Mason City had things turned out differently. Griffin proposed an artistic or curvilinear plat. Clark absconded as had Janney so the area was later re-platted in traditional form, and the southeast portion reserved as the present park. The Frisbee House (1703 Park Street) might be the only house that was built in relation to the Clark replat.

The area northwest of West Street and Tenth Avenue was successfully platted by W. T. Moyle and S. J. Pooley in early 1913 and it was, over time, successfully built up with a range of Craftsman style and revival style cottage architecture. The plat includes Grinnell's sole aeroplane bungalow and Lustron House. It has been recommended for consideration as a historic district, being the city's best range of that period of architecture.

By 1914 the automobile was finally becoming a means to cover substantial distances. The River to River Road was the first designated highway to pass through the city east and west, entering from the west on Fourth, then following Broad Street north to 6th and eastward out of town. The local right-of-way issue focused on how the route traversed the downtown, with advocates pushing either for Main or Broad Street as the north/south transition route. Peace was achieved with the "Union Route," a north/south running highway was announced. It entered the city from the south on Broad Street, turned and ran west one block on 4th to Main, and continued north along that street (*Herald*, May 26, 1914).

Tenth Avenue, east of the Minneapolis & St. Louis Railroad tracks, was finally opened to the east by the acquisition a parcel owned by Mrs. Rilla Rivers. Grinnell Savings Bank occupied its new 4th Avenue building in mid-July, while the Merchants National Bank occupied its new building on New Year's Day, 1915. The Congregational church built a substantial addition in 1914. On Grinnell Campus, work was started in the late summer on the new women's dormitories, at a cost of $150,000. The complex, consisting of two "cottages" with a central social center building, fronted south on 6th Avenue. Barrow from the excavations filled an unsightly gully that had long separated the campus from the railroad. A temporary railroad spur was laid to deliver building materials. Another mark of progress was the movement to establish a country club, complete with golf course, tennis courts, a two-story bungalow-style clubhouse (designed by Des Moines architect Harry Rawson (*Herald*, February 27, April 4, June 26, July 17, August 14, September 1, December 29, 1914).[15]

The second major paving program unfolded finally in 1914. The work followed an inspection tour made to Knoxville, Marshalltown and Newton by the Paving Committee of the Commercial Club. That group recommended the continued use of bithulithic paving rather than cement, wooden paving blocks or paving brick. As Figure * depicts, the large amount of paving favored the numbered avenues, and emphasis was placed upon paving the college frontage, and the developing highway routes (4th and 6th avenues) (*Herald*, April 10, 21, May 13, June 5, 1914).

[15] The residential southeast part of the city expanded southward with the platting of Highland Gardens, located south of Garfield Avenue, between West and Broad streets. Broad Street was extended south. Sixteen east/west running lots were offered at the low cost of a penny to a penny and a half per square foot. Still, moved in buildings were prohibited and new houses had to cost at least $1,000 (*Herald*, February 28, 1914).

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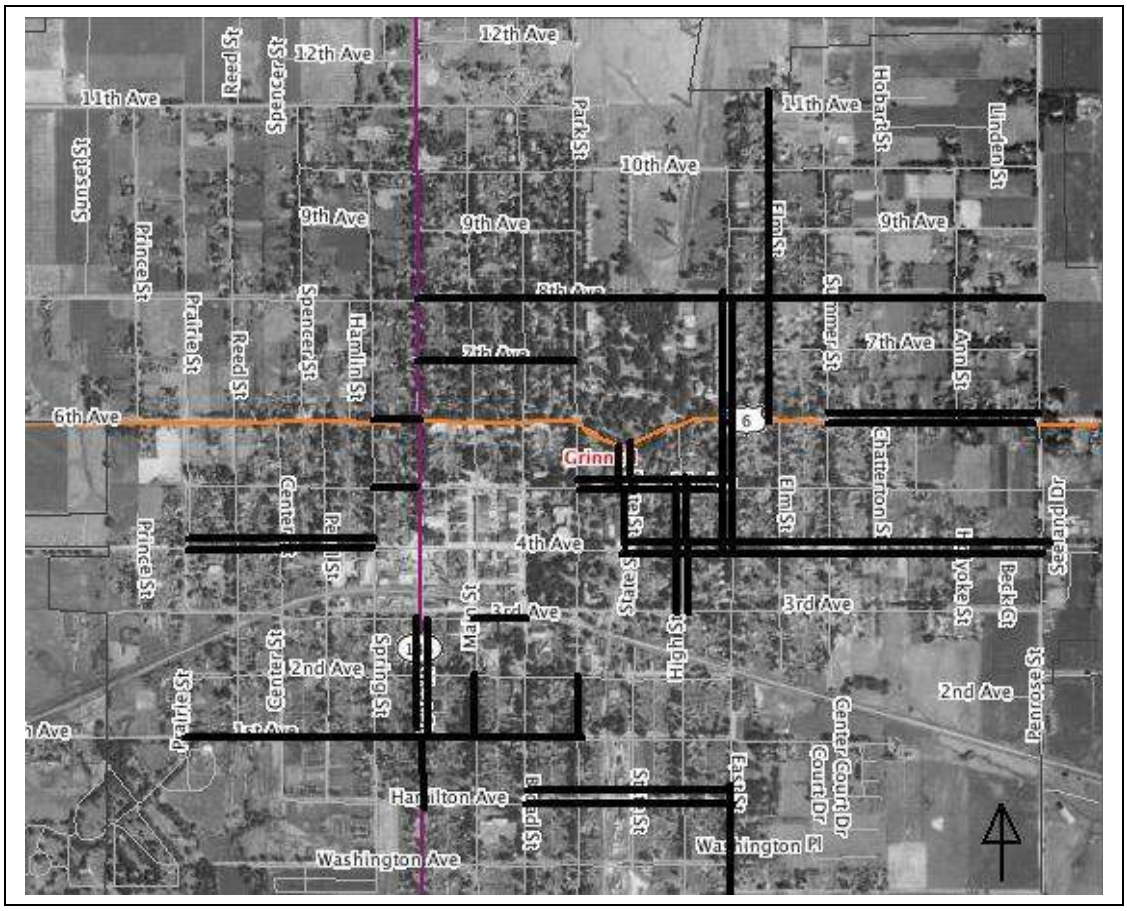
The Historical Residential Development of Grinnell, Poweshiek County, Iowa, 1855-1958:



Grinnell Paving Map, 1914 (parallel lines identify 30-foot wide paving, single lines 24-foot width)
(1930s aerial photograph as basemap, http://ortho.gis.iastate.edu)

W. C. Robinson of the city was famous as an earlier areonaut. He built his own plane and turned heads when he flew from Grinnell to Cedar Rapids in just 40 minutes. His next goal was to fly nonstop to Chicago, carrying letters. Grinnell received its first air mail on August 4, 1919, delivered on an airfield that was located north of Ward Field, the college's stadium. Fifteen years later, in late 1934, Grinnell lots its airfield to Montezuma, and its buildings and equipment were hauled to a six-way field that could be used under any wind conditions and, more important, was directly located on the main air corridor (Cedar Rapids *Daily Republican*, October 17, 1914; *Herald*, August 4, 1919; September 21, 1934).

The local Social Service League was organized in 1912 and was sub-titled "a bureau for community service." The civic group provided invaluable assistance to individuals and families who suffered from illness (the most common problem), job loss, poverty associated with old age or widowhood, criminality and improvidence. The annual reports rarely speak directly of patterns of community difficulty but the 1924 report is a glaring exception, wherein the following appears:

> During the winter of 1924, times were harder in Grinnell than for several years. The scarcity of jobs and the high cost of the common necessities of life kept too many families very close to the borderline of want.

A total of 122 families (430 individuals) received services or assistance that year. In addition 311 transients "drifted in and out of the community" and sought help, coming singly in groups, some in automobiles. A family of six drew particular notice, two women and three men were walking to New Mexico "in the hope of finding a more salubrious climate for one of the members" (The Social Service League 11th Annual Report, 1925, pp. 4-5).

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The situation naturally worsened substantially with the arrival of the Great Depression. The 1932 annual report by the Poweshiek County Social Service League recorded extensive want and offered the following summary:

> For a city the size of Grinnell these facts constitute a challenging and menacing problem. It means that not only a large number of people are out of work and must be deprived of a normal living but it means a lowering of living standards in many of these homes. It means discouragement, and a lowering of morale. It means danger to health, lack of many comforts and a closing of the doors to many opportunities in these families. It is preparing the way for futurre dependency and entailing many tragic consequences of which we are only partially aware. We earnestly hope that these days of tragedy for the poor may be shortened, and that the results of them may be less than seem to threaten now.
>
> It has been, however, on the whole a kindly year, a year of friendliness and much generous cooperation on the part of the community. In fact, the degree of community cooperation that has been accorded us has been unusual and probably more sympathetic and generous than in any year of our history. There has been more of public understanding and appreciation of the function we are fulfilling in the community than we have seen before…(Poweshiek County Social Service League Annual Report, 1932).

Individual/district residential property eligibility recommendations:

Four historical districts are recommended. Three of these are residential districts. The strongest and most readily apparent is the North Grinnell historic district, comprising the area due west of Grinnell College Campus (Sixth to Eleventh, Park to west side of West Street). A second, substantial and only slightly less impressive is an east-central area located between High and Summer, the railroad and Ninth Avenue, that borders the campus to the east and south east. This area, while lacking in the homogeneity of larger houses as a predominant core, contains a most impressive mix of those houses as well as almost all of the individually important earlier ones. The latter include some of the earliest surviving Grinnell houses, some of which were relocated eastwards. The third district, containing the best grouping of revival cottage examples and other "between the wars" residential architecture, is found on Tenth Avenue, between West and Spencer streets, to the west of the North Grinnell district. The fourth district would be the Grinnell College campus itself. The best boundary would be "U"-shaped, following the outer ring of historic buildings along East and Park streets with a Sixth Avenue south end linkage, within the area south of Tenth Street at least on the west side. There are two surviving residences on the west campus that could be included. It would appear that the campus experienced a wave of new construction through the early 1960s and the period of significance could be extended with justification to include those changes.

The following individual buildings have been determined to be National Register eligible or are so recommended at this point in time by this consultant:

Title	Address	Eligibility Status
North Grinnell Residential District	Park to West, 6th to 11th	Recommended by Patricia Eckhardt 1004, SHPO concurrence Criteria A,C October 27, 2004
Grinnell College Campus District		This consultant recommends a "U"-shaped perimeter district, also the Grinnell House, see below
Andrew McIntosh House	918 1st Avenue***check address	1854 Italianate, this consultant recommends, Criterion C
Brande Apartments	1001 4th Avenue	Late Gothic Revival, this consultant recommends, Criterion C
St. Marys Roman Catholic Church	1000 Broad	SHPO says eligible, Criterion A
R. G. Coutts House	1202 Hamilton Avenue	Coutts was the premier contractor
Grinnell House	1011 Park	This consultant recommends, Criteria C, A
A. L. Frisbee House	1703 Park, fronts on to 12th Street	This consultant recommends, Criteria C
Florence Stewart Kerr House	1333 Summer Street	Worth further investigation, Criterion

		A, but appears to be childhood home through college graduation
"Alamo"	Penrose Street north of Hwy. 6	Spanish Mission style, 1922, this consultant recommends, Criteria C
Raymond Kellogg House	1125 4th Avenue	1859, needs to be investigated

These buildings stand out within the broader documented Grinnell community. A great many houses were photographed as part of the 1988 survey but this effort was by no means exhaustive and no historical research of any depth was conducted. Many houses have not been evaluated largely due to the lack of research and a developed comparative historical and architectural context. It would appear that the vast majority of properties of architectural interest fall within the boundaries of the recommended historic districts. Two early surviving houses, 904 East (1855-Thomas Holyoke) and 920 East Street (1856, Crane-Jamison), fall within the eastern district.

The following Grinnell properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

Title	**Address**	**Listing Date**
CRI&P Railroad Grinnell Passenger Depot	Park and State	December 12, 1976
Merchant's National Bank	4th and Broad	January 7, 1976
Stewart Library	926 Commercial	Novembe 21, 1976
Spaulding Manufacturing Company	4th Avenue, Spring Street	December 21, 1978
Goodnow Hall	Grinnell College Campus	April 26, 1979
Levi P. Grinnell House	1002 Park	Octobe 1, 1979
Mears Hall	Grinnell College Campus	April 26, 1979
B. J. Ricker House	1510 Broad	December 25, 1979
Charles H. Spencer House	611 6th Avenue	January 25, 1980
Bowers & McDonald Office Bldg.	816 Commercial	December 20, 1990
Interior Telephone Company Bldg.	815 3rd Avenue	December 20, 1990
Grinnell Herald	813 5th Avenue	January 17, 1991
Grinnell Historic Commercial District	Main to Broad, 5th to Commercial	January 17, 1991
E. A. and Rebecca Marsh House	833 East Street	April 15, 1999

The following notable buildings have been recently demolished:

Blair Hall, Grinnell College Campus, 1961
Josiah Bushnell Grinnell House, 720 Broad Street, date?
First United Presbyterian Church, 1015 5th Avenue, 1977
Bartlett House, 1030 Broad Street, 1997
Almy-Cooper House, 436 East Street, burned by fire department, September 1978
Uncle Sam Club
Darby Gymnasium, Grinnell College, 2005
1115 Broad Street, 2006
1025 First Avenue, Sumner Bixby House, 1856-67, 2007
919 Seventh Avenue, 2007

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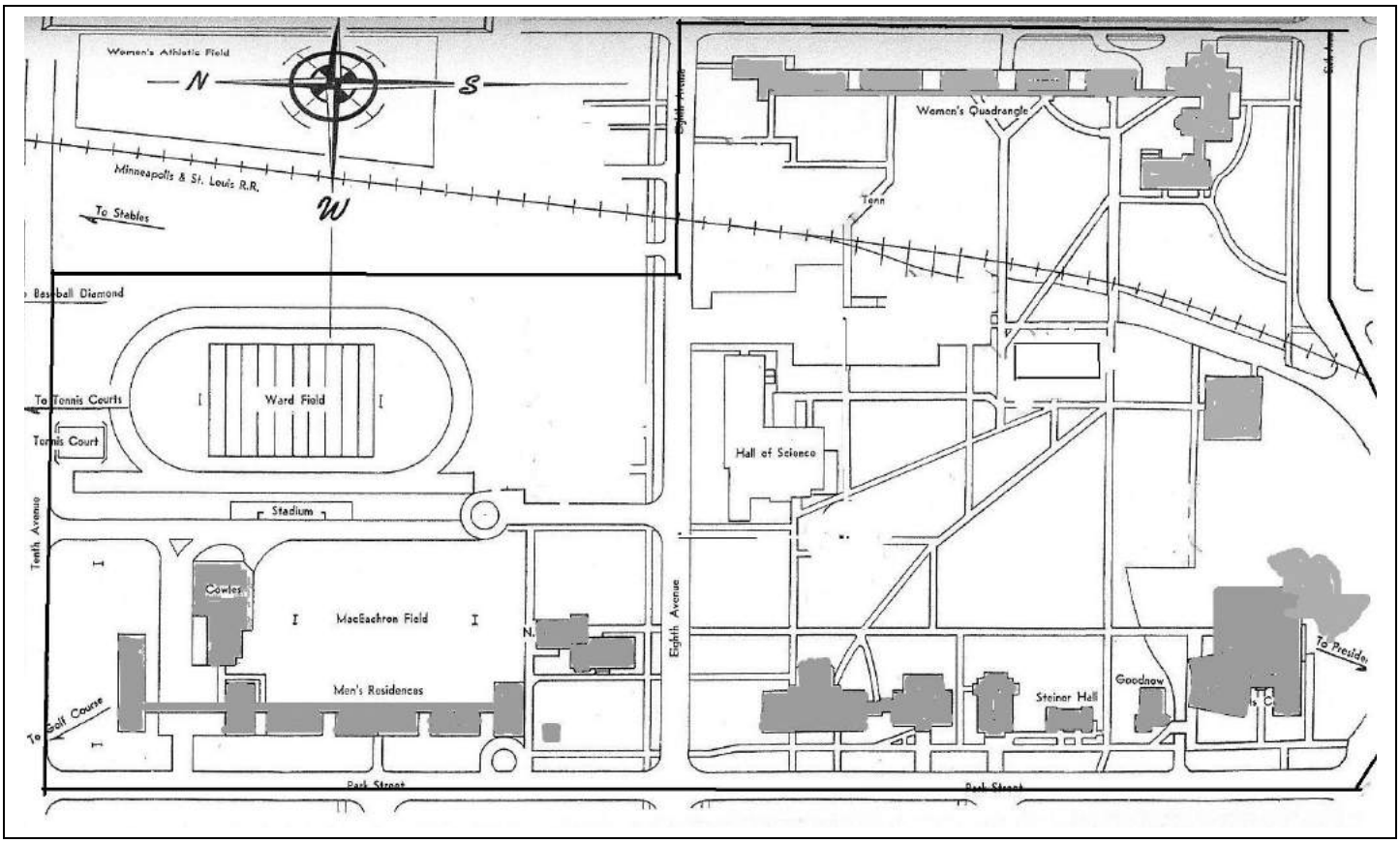

Figure: Recommended Grinnell College Historic District Boundaries
(based upon 1960 college bulletin map, gray shading identifies contributing properties,
black line marks potential boundary)

48

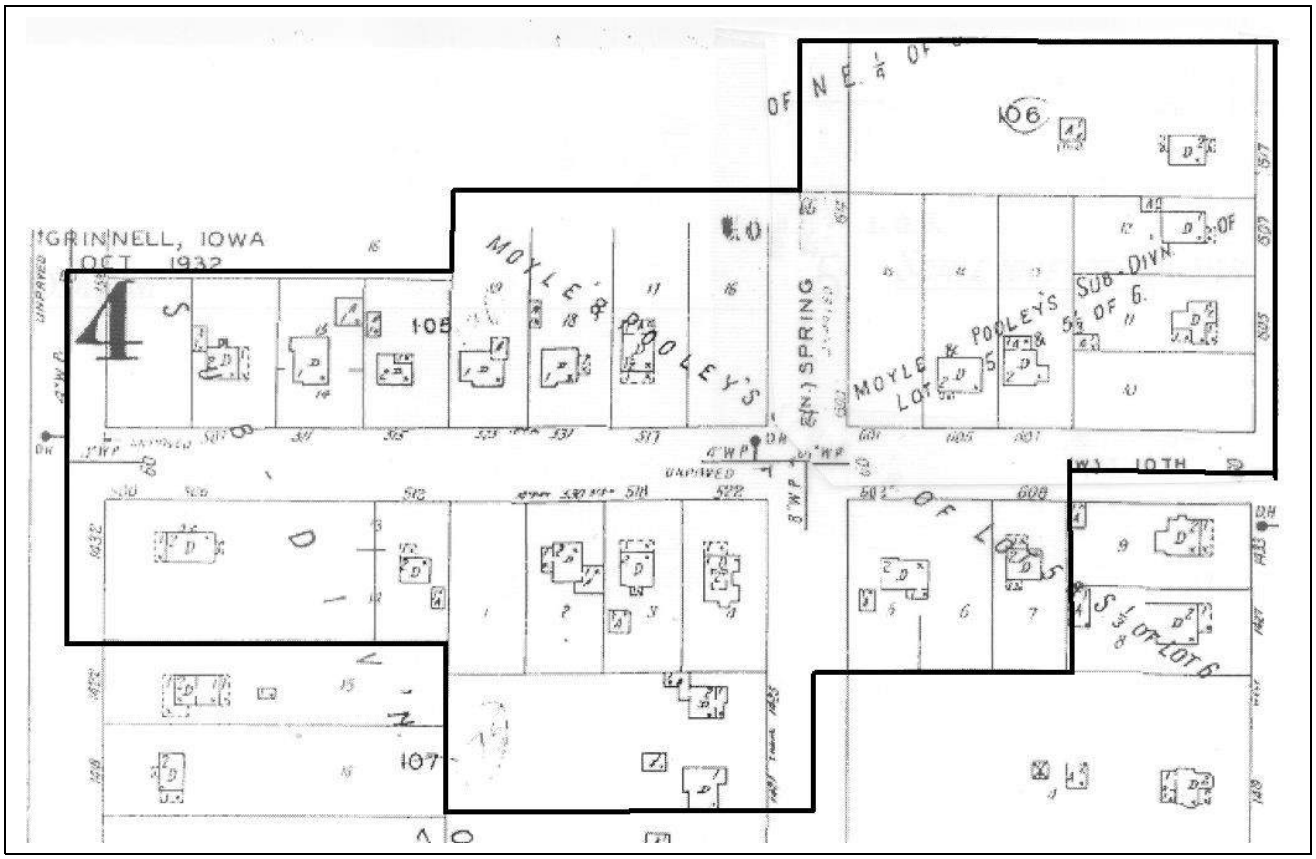

Figure: Proposed Moyle's & Pooley Addition Historic District

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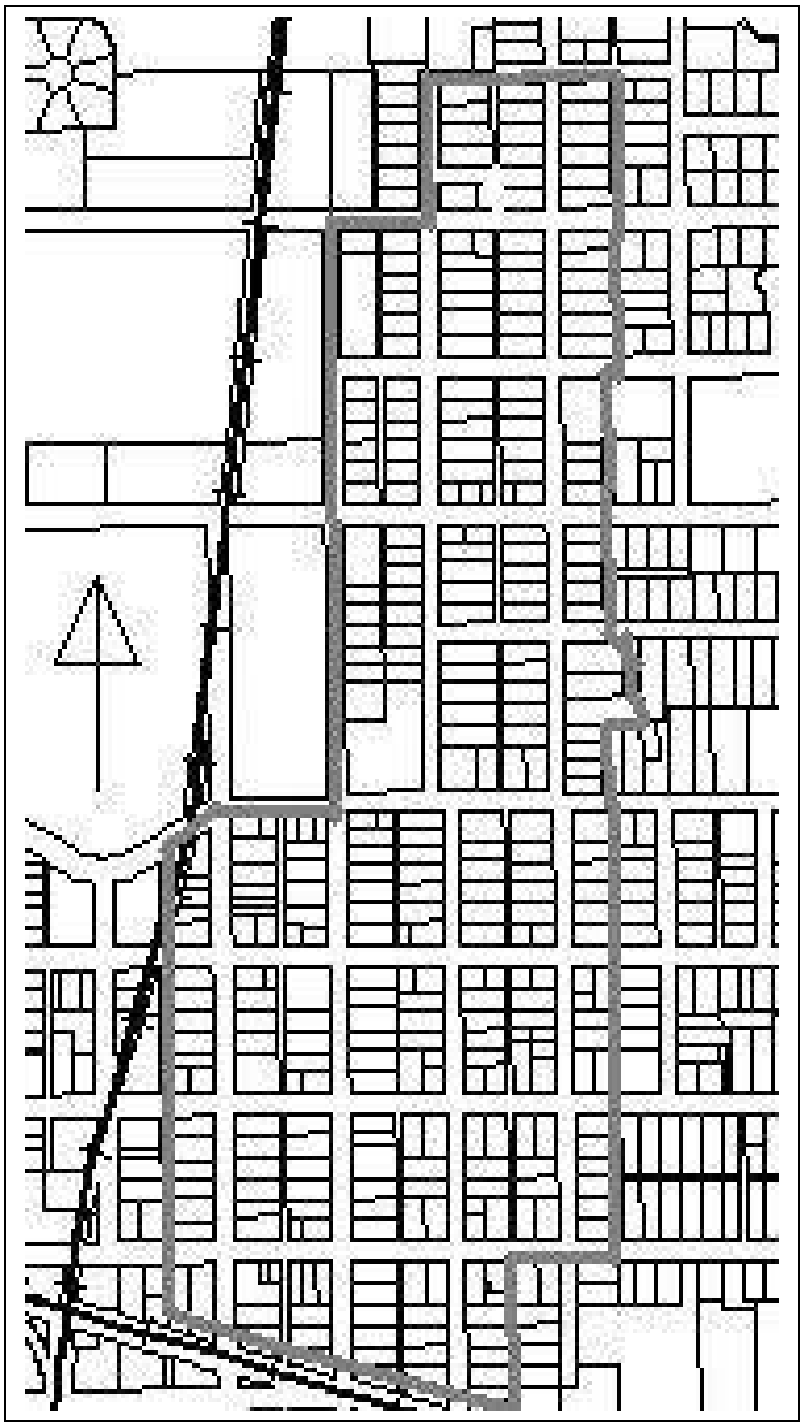

Figure: Proposed Original Town/East Grinnell Historic District

Hold:
The Grinnell Building and Loan Association is in a prosperous condition and gaining ground every day. It has been the means of starting a number of young men on the road to wealth. They have been induced to take a few shares and thus begin to save a few dollars every month. These same young men will be surprised after a lapse of time at the nice little footing their monthly deposits have made. While those monthly savings are greatly benefiting those share holders they are aiding others in erecting permanent homes." (*Herald*, October 25, 1889).